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The Challenge Bowl study guide is subject to change after the 2015 MCN November elections. Please check the tribal website for the updated version of the study guide then. The Challenge Bowl committee shall not be responsible for incorrect answers given during the competition due to the change. Branches of Government section have been updated.



Sponsored by the  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation

# Challenge Bowl 2016



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## ***“A Struggle to Survive”***

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The Muscogee Women-Keepers of the tradition and culture of the Nation.

Since the beginning of time the women of this nation have played a major role in the existence of the Muscogee people and to this day their contribution has successfully allowed this nation to survive.

Today, this struggle is yours to bear, and today’s challenge is made more difficult by the fact that now you must be able to walk in two worlds and still maintain your balance.

The structure of our ancient society is still intact in some parts of our nation today, and you, the Muscogee women, must protect this to ensure that future generations of Muscogee people have a foundation to build on and an identity to be proud of.

In your educational experience you have learned that listening is a key ingredient for learning. As a student of this nation, you have learned the ways of our people and now as you move forward to represent this Nation of people, you must also expose the humbleness that our ancestors also displayed in their daily lives.

As you learn the history of our people, both in the written and oral form, you can feel and touch the spirit that they possessed and this spirit is among us today. This is the same spirit that compelled you to be here today.

History tells us, that we the Muscogee people have endured tremendous tribulations, from ethnic cleansing, forced removal and religious genocide, to the dissolving of tribal governments and then finally the attempt to separate the Indian from the person through enrollment of young Muscogee Creek children to “Finishing School,” later called “Boarding Schools.”

The horror stories that have been relayed to us by the ones that have gone on before us, we must not dwell on them or forever hold a grudge. Their stories must never be forgotten. We must listen to these stories and learn from them, so that history does not repeat itself.

The road that we travel today was planned out for us many, many years ago by a Creek leader named Opothleyahola in a speech given at Asbury Mission on the North Fork in November 1859.

He said: “My brothers, many, many, many years ago, when I was a child, there was a beautiful island in the Chattahoochee River. It was covered with stately trees and carpeted with green grass. When the Indian was hungry and could not find game elsewhere, he could always go to the island and kill a deer. An unwritten law forbade the killing of more than one deer, and, even then, the hunter might resort to the island only when he had failed elsewhere. But the banks of that island were of sandy soil. As the floods of the river rolled on this side and on that, the banks wore away, and the island shrunk in size. When our people left the country, the island had become so small that there was only room for two or three of the great trees, and most of the green grass was gone. The deer, once so plentiful there, had entirely disappeared.

“I have since learned that there is a kind of grass which, if it had been planted on the banks of that beautiful island, might have saved it. The grass strikes its roots deeply into the sandy soil and binds it so firmly that the waters of the flood cannot wear it away.

“My brothers, we Indians, are like that island in the middle of the river. The white man comes upon us as a flood. We crumble and fall, even as the sandy banks of that beautiful island in the Chattahoochee. The Great Spirit knows, as you know, that I would stay that flood which comes thus to wear us away, if we could. As well might we try to push back the flood of the river itself.

“As the island in the river might have been saved by planting the long rooted grass upon its banks, so let us save our people by educating our boys and girls and young men and young women in the ways of the white man. Then they may be planted and deeply rooted about us and our people may stand unmoved in the flood of the white man.”

So let us not forget, from where we came.

Today starts another chapter in our history, as we continue down this path that our forefathers had planned for us. For this nation to survive with its traditions, culture and language, it is incumbent for the Muscogee women to regain its strength and to inspire other women to step forward and say “Yes, I am a Muscogee Creek woman, I know who I am, I know where I’ve been and I know where I am going.”

As a role model for the next group behind you, how many will you inspire? How many will follow in your footsteps? Let’s hope and pray there will be many.

MVTO

God Bless All

Wilbur Chebon Gouge

# Mvskoke History

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## THE MISSISSIPPIAN ERA



Our **Muscogee (Creek) ancestors** lived for thousands of years in Southeastern North America, in what are now the states of Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, South Carolina and Florida. Over time, their culture evolved into what is now called the **Mississippian Culture**. During the Mississippian time period they built **huge earthen mounds**. These mounds were built for various purposes. Some were platforms for the homes of chiefs, some were for religious ceremonies and some were for burials. They are the only structures that remain of the many highly organized and flourishing **tribal towns** of the Mississippian society.

The Mississippian Society was made up of **chiefdoms**. Each chiefdom had one ruler- **a chief**, who held absolute authority over an entire region of tribal towns. Sometimes a very powerful Chiefdom had power over more than one region. The **Coosa (or Kusa) Chiefdom** dominated the smaller chiefdoms and communities in what is now northeastern Tennessee, through northwest Georgia and into central Alabama, covering a distance of 400 miles. Within the Mississippian chiefdom the position of chief was an inherited position.

### Mound sites

Although many of the ancient mounds have been destroyed by farming and development, some have been preserved. They are the only visible remains of the Mississippian Culture that can be found throughout the southeastern United States. One of the best preserved of these town sites is the **Ocmulgee National Monument** near present-day Macon, Georgia. (Pictured below)





The earth floor of this “earth lodge” with an eagle platform is well over one thousand years old. Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Georgia.

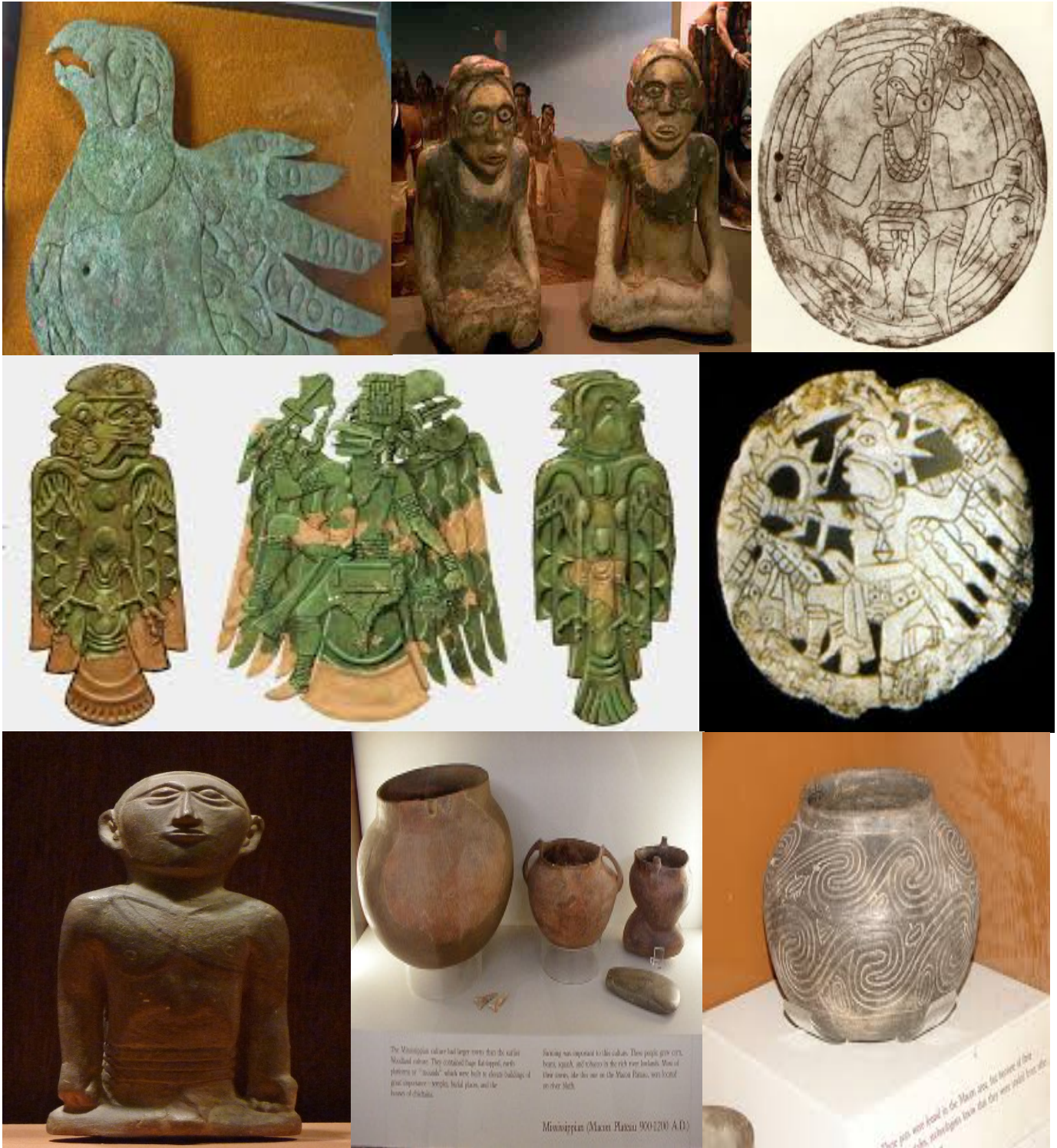
One hundred and twenty seven miles northeast of Ocmulgee National Monument is the site of the **Etowah Mounds**, another ancient Muskogean site.





## SOUTHEASTERN CEREMONIAL COMPLEX

One notable aspect of the Mississippian culture, was the artwork that was produced. Today it is referred to as the **Southeastern Ceremonial Complex**. It includes engraved copper, finely carved stone and shell necklaces and pendants, stone statues, and intricately wrought stone maces, clubs and hatchets as well as pottery.



## EUROPEAN CONTACT ERA

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In 1540 **Hernando De Soto's expedition** spent a year traveling through the Muscogee territory. They could see by the large towns and the prosperous countryside that our ancestors lived well. They were strong and healthy, and they did not have to work very hard to survive in the resource-rich region.

DeSoto's expedition brought deadly diseases from Europe, such as measles, small pox and "the plague". The rapid spread of European diseases killed thousands of Muskogean people before they were able to pass on all of their cultural information. Some towns lost most of their population. The survivors from several towns then banded together to recreate their old way of life as best they could.

After De Soto's expedition, there were two more Spanish expeditions. Tristan De Luna came in 1560 and Juan Pardo in 1566. Both were in search of the lush life of the Coosa Chiefdom that DeSoto had described. They were disappointed and dismayed to see that the population was much smaller and thistles and weeds grew in place of the previously cultivated fields that had stretched from one town to the next.

## EUROPEAN TRADE ERA

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In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, after hearing the reports from early explorers of the riches and bounty in North America, Europeans began to colonize the region and establish towns and farms. The **English** founded Charles Town in 1670 as the capital of the colony of Carolina. They became well acquainted with the Muskogean people through trade. Over time the English came to refer to them as "**Creeks**", although the Muskogeans continued to refer to themselves by their tribal town names, such as Tukvpvce, Coweta, Cussetah, Abihka, Alabama, etc. Eventually the English referred to the tribal towns as "**Upper**" and "**Lower Creeks**". The "Upper Creek" towns were those located along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers; the "Lower Creek" towns were those located along the Catv Hvtce and Flint Rivers.

In the late 1690's, the **Spanish** established the town of Pensacola from which they also traded with the "Creeks". In 1717, the **French** established Fort Toulouse as their trading post in Alabama where the Tallapoosa and Coosa Rivers meet.

The Europeans mainly wanted deerskins and Indian captives from the "Creeks". For these, they traded guns and ammunition, European-style clothing, beads, paint, metal tools and weapons, copper and tin pots and pans and other items.

Except for the diseases, nothing had a greater effect on the Muscogee culture than the trade industry. After about three generations of trading, the "Creeks" became dependent on the trade goods. They discarded their traditional ways of making tools, clothing, water vessels and cooking.

## THE ASSIMILATION ERA

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Muscogee way of life was further disrupted by **Benjamin Hawkins** and his **Assimilation Policy**; a plan to make Muscogee people live like white people by switching the traditional roles of the men and women; teaching European farming techniques; and putting the children in schools to learn English, mathematics and European social skills.





As the white population continued to grow the U.S. government wanted to turn one of the Creek trading paths into a **Federal Road**. The Lower Creeks had already agreed to allow the Road to be built but most of the Upper Creeks were against it. They believed that it would bring more whites who would kill their game, cut their trees, foul their water, sell whiskey to their young and settle in their land. A group of Upper Creeks emerged to defend the traditions and homelands of the Muscogee people. They were called the **Red Sticks**. Among their leaders were Hillis Hadjo (Josiah Francis), Cussetah Tustenuggee (High Head Jim), Paddy Walsh, Peter McQueen and others.

For two years the Red Sticks fought twelve major battles known as the **Creek War of 1813-1814**. The war ended when the Red Sticks, led by **Menawa**, were defeated by Andrew Jackson's army at the **Battle of Horseshoe Bend on March 27, 1814**. Andrew Jackson had an army of three thousand armed soldiers and two cannons. The Red Sticks had one thousand warriors, most of whom fought with bows and arrows, tomahawks and hatchets. Only about a third of them had guns. After Horseshoe Bend, Jackson became president and began the process of moving all the Creeks out of the southeast and into **Indian Territory**, now known as Oklahoma. This process included many treaties in which the Creeks were required to give up large amounts of their ancestral homeland.



*HORSESHOE BEND IN THE TALLAPOOSA RIVER, now a National Park*

In 1829, **Andrew Jackson** became president and immediately went to work on The Removal of all tribes in the east. Although opponents of Removal claimed it was an immoral violation of the spirit of the treaties that the U.S. had signed with the tribes, Jackson still won. On **May 26, 1830, The Removal Act** was signed into law.

## HEROES OF THE MVSKOKE PEOPLE

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**ALEXANDER MCGILLIVRAY**, also known as Hopere Mekko, was born around 1750, near present day Montgomery, Alabama. McGillivray was born to a Scot fur trapper, Lachlan McGillivray and a half-Creek, half French woman named Sehoy Marchand.

Alexander grew up during a very important time for the Creek people. Spain had been the most powerful foreign country trying to expand in America during the late 1700's. At the same time, the American Revolution was occurring, where English Colonists were challenging Great Britain's power and the French had established a trading post at Fort Toulouse. The Creeks had dealings with all three groups.

Alexander worked at his father's trading post until he was about 14. The trading post was located near the Tallapoosa River in Alabama. During the 1760's, Lachlan sent Alexander to schools in Savannah

and Charleston to receive his education. Lachlan McGillivray fled to Scotland in the early 1770's. He had been loyal to Britain, and the American colonists had seized many properties of British sympathizers. Since he was left behind with his mother, Alexander was able to explore the ties with his Creek relatives. By 1775, he was recognized as a young leader among the Upper Creek tribal towns. Alexander, who never got over his father's losses at the hands of the United States, led some Creek warriors in a British attack on Georgia in 1779.

In 1780, British forces were attacked by Spain in Florida. McGillivray again led Creek warriors in aiding the British. He refused to deal with the new American government, and entered into a treaty relationship with Spain in 1784. McGillivray helped organize Upper and Lower Creeks in resisting white intrusion into the Creek country and was a part of the Creek People's declaration of war upon the state of Georgia in 1786.

Alexander McGillivray experienced many changes in the Creek way of life during his lifetime. His leadership made it possible for the Creek people to have formal, governmental relations with Great Britain and Spain. By 1787, the United States Constitution was adopted, and the agreements the Creek people had with foreign governments began to weaken. President George Washington wanted to begin a United States federal Indian policy. In 1790, Washington's cabinet representatives negotiated the Treaty of New York with McGillivray and 29 Mekkos of the Creek Nation. The treaty recognized borders of the Creek country; the United States promised to remove white trespassers from Creek lands, but called for the Creek people to cede lands to the United States. This treaty set a pattern which would continue into the next century where tribal peoples would give up lands for promises made by the United States; promises that were often broken or ignored.



McGillivray continued to provide leadership for Creek concerns, and resisted white intrusion into the Creek country until his death in 1793.

**PETER MCQUEEN** was born around 1780, a member of the tribal town of Tallahassee (Talisi). His mother was a Creek woman and his father was a Scottish trader. When he grew up, Peter became a leader in his tribal town. He believed in Muscogee traditions and became a Red Stick warrior.

In 1812, Peter McQueen led some Tallahassee warriors to the Spanish town of Pensacola, where they obtained 300 pounds of ammunition for the Red Sticks. While returning, the party was ambushed by some white civilian soldiers at a place called **Burnt Corn Creek**. Being caught in the middle of preparing a meal, they escaped into the brush. Realizing that the soldiers were not chasing them, the Creek warriors returned and surprised the soldiers who got away with some of the horses and ammunition.

Soon, the Creeks went back to Pensacola to get more military supplies. They returned to their homelands with more provisions, where they had successful raids against the white people such as the one at Ft. Mims. This event so angered the white governments of Georgia and Alabama, and Andrew Jackson of the U.S. Army, that they wanted action taken to get rid of the Creek people.

Peter McQueen lived out his days in Alabama, after the Creek War of 1813-1814.



**MENAWA** was born in 1766. During the Creek War of 1813, he was the Heneha (Second Chief) of Okfuskee tribal town. According to William Weatherford, as Heneha of Okfuskee, he controlled the Red Sticks, so named for the painted red sticks they carried, one of which was thrown away each day to count down the days to an important event.

Menawa led the Red Sticks into battle against an American Army of 3,300 soldiers led by Andrew Jackson. Even after realizing that his strategy was not going to work, he and the Red Stick Warriors went head to head with the American Army, in what is known as the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. He was wounded seven times and laid unconscious among the dead until nightfall. Under the cover of darkness, he crawled to the river where he

found a canoe. Later he told the remainder of the survivors to return to their home towns and make peace as best they could.

The Creek Nation was split on how to deal with the overrun of their lands by the whites. William McIntosh was for the American side. McIntosh, along with other lesser leaders, signed the illegal Treaty of Indian Springs, agreeing to sell Muscogee lands. Menawa and others were outraged. They executed McIntosh, in accordance with tribal law on April 30, 1825.

During the Seminole Wars in 1836 Menawa's property was confiscated by the whites, and his family forced west. He followed later. Nothing is known of Menawa after he moved west, not even where he is buried. He fought Removal for a long time.



## WILLIAM WEATHERFORD

was born in 1780. He was the son of a Scottish trader and a Creek woman of the Wind Clan named Seho. His early childhood was spent on his father's plantation near present day Wetumpka, Alabama. His mixed background enabled William to easily cross back and forth between the Creek and white worlds, a characteristic that would aid him throughout his life.

The Shawnee leader named Tecumseh came to the Creek country in 1811 to rally the Creeks to join his confederacy and rise up and rid their land of all whites. William, who is also called Red Eagle, attended the gathering of Chiefs and warriors at Tukapvche, where Tecumseh spoke. His message captured the

feelings and emotions of many Creek warriors, including Weatherford. He began to spread the message throughout the Muscogee tribal towns.

In August of 1813, Weatherford and other Red sticks attacked Ft Mims in retaliation for the Battle of Burnt Corn. About 400 people were killed including many half-blood Creeks who had taken refuge there. News of the attack caused a panic throughout much of the south. General Andrew Jackson began marching to the Creek country, intent on subduing any further attacks by the Red Sticks. He destroyed every Creek town he came to along the way. He was especially looking to capture and punish William Weatherford for Ft. Mims.

Weatherford was absent from Horseshoe Bend when Jackson's army attacked. After defeating the Red Sticks at Horseshoe Bend, Jackson ordered his men to capture William Weatherford. In the weeks after Horseshoe Bend, Weatherford realized that to continue fighting would destroy not only what were left of his warriors, but their families, as well. The women and children were hiding in the forests where they were growing sick and dying of starvation. Out of concern for them and not for his own fate, Weatherford surrendered. Catching Jackson by surprise by bravely walking straight into his camp, Weatherford introduced himself to Jackson and told him he was not afraid of him. He was only surrendering to save his people from more disaster. Jackson admired Weatherford for his bravery and decided to trust in his promise to persuade the remaining Red Sticks to surrender. Weatherford walked out without punishment.



**OPOTHLEYAHOLA** was born around 1798. He was a member of the Upper Creek tribal town of Tukvpcce. He was the speaker for his tribal town Mekko, Big Warrior. Opothleyahola always challenged the power of the Lower Creek Chiefs, who were friendly with the white people. He believed that anything that concerned the homelands should have the consent of the whole Creek Nation. Opothleyahola spoke out many times against treaties that ceded land to the whites. Although he signed many treaties, it was often under duress.

Under The Treaty of Indian Springs in February of 1825, the signing Creek Chiefs sold land to the U.S. which was illegal by Creek law. Opothleyahola, along with others went to Washington, D.C. to protest the terms of the treaty. Under the new treaty he insisted upon the removal of white intruders who were invading Creek Lands. A new treaty was made in 1826 which nullified the Treaty of Indian Springs. This is the only time

in history that the U.S. government has agreed to nullify a treaty.

Noting the success of Georgia in getting Creek lands, the state of Alabama began to exert pressure on their state government and the federal government. This pressure eventually forced the Creeks to sign a treaty in March of 1832, by which the Creeks gave up all their lands east of the Mississippi River. The Creeks were given 5 years to leave their Alabama homes, and in 1836 Opothleyahola led 8,000 of his people to Indian Territory, now Oklahoma.

The Creeks had not been in their new homeland long when the Civil War began. This was no real affair of the Creeks, and the wiser leaders counseled the tribe to stay neutral. However, circumstances were forcing them to join either the North or the South. Both sides promised the Creeks that if they joined their side, their current homelands would be protected, and they would be able to retain them.

Wanting to remain neutral, Opothleyahola, decided to lead his people to a Union Army camp in Kansas. He led 10,000 of his followers (known as the Loyal Creeks) who traveled with all of their belongings and cattle to Kansas. They had to fight Confederate companies along the way, but the Loyal Creeks ran out of ammunition and guns, and were scattered. The survivors reached the Union camp, many wearing no warm clothes or shoes and had no food. In Kansas, 240 Creeks died of famine and exposure and many amputations occurred. Opothleyahola, broken in health, but dauntless in spirit, rode in severe winter conditions to officers in another Army camp. He was unsuccessful in getting the help that was promised his people. He never recovered from being sick and exhausted. He died the following spring, March of 1863 and was buried in an unmarked grave near the Sac and Fox agency in Kansas. His people never forgot him because of his leadership, courage and concern for the Creek people.



WARD COACHMAN

## WARD Co-cha-my (COACHMAN)

Among a small number of Creeks yet remaining in Alabama was a son of Jim Boy named Ward Co-cha-my who did not remove west until about 1845. Three years later he returned to Alabama to aid some of his people in immigrating to the Indian Territory. He arrived at Fort Smith, June 24, 1848, with a party of sixty-five Indians, but despite his earnest efforts he was unable to secure a number who were held as slaves by white people. In a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in D.C., he wrote, *"I think there yet remains in Alabama not less than 100 Creeks and most of them in a deplorable condition; a man by the name of Dickerson in Coosa County has one family, a woman and her children, 7 in number. A Mr. Floyd and a Rev. Mr. Hays both of Autauga County have each a number of Creeks. I tried to get these but was prevented doing so by threats of their would-be masters. I shall get them yet - but not this season; when the waters are in good boating order next season you will hear from me again."*<sup>1</sup>

Ward Coachman served as clerk of the district court of Deep Fork District in 1868 and as a member and speaker of the House of Warriors in 1875. He was court clerk of the Wewoka District in 1873-4, served as a member and President of the House of Kings in 1888 and was dispatched as a delegate from the Creek Nation to Washington upon five different occasions in 1881-2.

In the fall of 1875, Ward Coachman was chosen second chief and became Principal Chief of the Creek Nation upon the impeachment of his predecessor on December 15, 1876.





CHITTO HARJO or CRAZY SNAKE

**CHITTO HARJO**, whose English name was Wilson Jones, was a full-blood Creek Indian with traditional values. After the Green Peach War, and Ispahcher's retirement from public affairs, Harjo became the acknowledged leader of the dissident full-blood Creeks, who were opposed to the division of Creek Lands in the Indian Territory. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was great pressure to divide Creek lands into individual allotments and dissolve the tribal government. The dissident Creeks who were followers of Harjo were few, but were very determined to recapture and resume the traditional ways of the Creeks. These Creeks felt that they had been wronged by the Federal Government and that both the spirit and the law of past treaties had been violated. These, and their cherished hereditary rights and immunities had been destroyed. They believed the government had treated them as people of no value and in fact, there was much truth of this in the way the government's relations were held.

In 1901, Chitto Harjo tried to establish a separate political status for his followers at Hickory Ground. However, the government sent troops to take Harjo and his followers into custody. They were indicted,

tried and convicted in Federal court, but were later reprimanded and paroled by the court. Over the following years, Creek tribal lands were divided into allotments, and the "Snake Band" refused to select any lands for their respective allotments. Arbitrary selections were then made for them.

Late in 1906, a Special Senate Investigating Committee came to Indian Territory to investigate and report on general conditions. Chitto Harjo, with some followers, was present, and he was recognized by the Committee, and given the opportunity to speak. With great dignity and solemnity, Harjo gave a spellbinding speech, telling the Senators of the dealings between his people and the Federal government. He told how the Creeks were forced to give up their homelands in Georgia and Alabama for lands in the west, even though they had been promised these lands would be theirs forever. The Creeks made a recovery from the terrible march from their old homelands to the area later to become Indian Territory. Then, the Civil War began. Harjo told of how he joined the Union Army, thinking to protect his home, land and family. But after the Civil War, the federal government made the Creek people give up a major portion of their lands.

In 1907, Indian Territory became a state. A rumor started that Harjo was leading an insurrection. He knew nothing about this, until he was told the state militia was looking for him. He and some of his followers fled into Choctaw country and he lived with friend Daniel Bob, where he died in 1913. Alexander Posey, the famous Creek poet, wrote a tribute to Chitto Harjo, which was inspired by Harjo's dignified and heroic stature during his imprisonment in 1901. Harjo was one who wanted only justice, fairness and equality for his people, which was never forthcoming during his lifetime.

# Mvskoke Customs & Traditions

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## ***FAMILIES/CLANS***

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Clans are the basis of a family within the traditional Mvskoke society. Unlike the Europeans, clan members are considered family instead of members of 'blood relation'. CLANS are composed of all people who are descendants of the same ancestral clan grouping. Each person belongs to the clan of his or her mother, who belongs to clan of her mother; this is called matrilineal descent. Fathers are important within the family system, but within the clan, it is the mother's brother (the mother's nearest blood relation) who functions as the primary disciplinarian and role model. The same titles are used for both family and clan relations. For example, clan members of approximately the same age consider each other as brother and sister, even if they have never met before.

When a marriage took place, the man would leave his parents to live with his wife's family. When a home was built for them, all the property and contents belonged to the wife. A man's hûti, home, was not usually where he spent most of his adult life, but the home of his mother and the other women of his clan. In case a stranger visited the town and made known to what clan he belonged, it was the duty of a man married into that clan to invite him to his house. In case of separation, the woman would gather all of her husband's belongings and set them outside their home. That was a sign she wanted him to leave and go back to his mother's home.

Traditionally, the father had no care of his own child. The women would keep and rear all the children; having the entire control over them until they were able to provide for themselves except for the disciplinarian role. The women appeared to have sufficient natural affection for them: they never struck or whipped a child for its faults.

Clan names were orally passed down to the next generation. It was important to know one's own clan. During the ceremonial dances, the men and boys were seated according to their clan. At one time, there were more than fifty known clan names although some may not be true clans. The elders would randomly ask the children their clan name to make sure they knew. Sometimes, a family would have a picture or sketch of their clan on pottery or a tattoo on their body to represent their clan.

Clan ties were strong; they served as a traditional bond. The clan system added structure to Mvskoke society by influencing marriage choices, personal friendship and partnerships with other tribal towns in tribal affairs. For instance, if a clan family needed assistance to build a home, the clan members would come together and help build his home.

It was traditionally considered a serious offense to kill or eat one's own clan animal or to marry into one's own clan. Clan members would discipline a member if he/she committed any one of these offenses. To marry into one's own clan was the most serious offense which had severe consequences.

## TRIBAL TOWNS

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Tribal towns were actually villages of the Mvskoke people but the Europeans viewed them as towns because of their structural lay-out. The dwellings consisted of little squares, or rather of four dwelling-houses inclosing a square area, exactly on the plan of the public square. Every family, however, did not have four houses; some had three, others had two and some but one, each built according to the number of his family. For those who were wealthy had four buildings, one is used as a place to cook food and used as a winter house also known as a 'hot house', another was a summer house and hall for receiving visitors, the third house was the storage for food and other provisions. The last house was two stories high and was divided into two apartments; the lower story of one end being the potato house, where roots and fruits were stored. At the other end of this building, both upper and lower stories were open on three sides. The lower story served as a shed for their saddles, pack-saddles, gears and other lumber. The loft overhead was a very spacious, airy, and a pleasant pavilion where the chief of the family relaxed during the summer and received his guests. The fourth part of the apartment was a storage place for deer-skins, furs, and other merchandise for his customers especially if he was quite wealthy. Sometimes a porch was built in front of the house. Smaller families and the less wealthy built one, two or three houses which would be sufficient for their purposes.

Each of these groups of buildings was occupied by one family and the 'houses of daughters' were those adjoining in the same block or district. Every home had a garden and a parcel of land according to the number in his family. The boundary between each group of houses or property was a strip of grass, erection of poles or any other natural or artificial means to show a boundary. The houses were in a more elaborate pattern with several families living just several hundred feet from each other.

This organized pattern of dwellings surrounded a public square with four arbors, a council house, chooc-ofau thluc-co, which was a mound and a chunky yard. Within the square was the sacred fire or poca (grandfather) and the ceremonial ring, paskofv; both were considered sacred. This was the sacred ground where dances, songs and prayers were held. The council house or mound was the meeting place for the chief, Mekko and his advisors or warriors. The ground that contained the square and mound was considered the men's domain. Women were not allowed within the square or in the mound unless given permission by the Mekko. The chunky yard was the playing field for the stick ball and other games.

Each tribal town had names and was organized by membership in a specific Tribal Town or Etlwv. Each tvlwv acted as both an independent community and a member of the larger "Confederacy" of the Mvksoke nation. When some of the towns became crowded or overpopulated, another town was built by the same Etlwv but had a different name. In the mid-1700s, there were sixty to seventy towns, besides the many villages not counted and on average about two hundred inhabitants to each town, giving approximately eleven thousand inhabitants.

It was very important to know one's own tribal town and clan. This served as identification when visiting another town or area. Although, later Europeans labeled the towns, Upper and Lower,

geographically, the only distinction was their tribal town. Upper towns were located in the upper portion of Alabama near the Tallapoosa and Coosa rivers. They were considered as the traditionalist because of their resistance to European lifestyles and ways. The lower towns were located near the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers and they accepted the European lifestyle and allowed European men to marry their women.

Today the tribal towns that have an active fire are known as ceremonial grounds. (see stomp dances) There are 16 active ceremonial grounds. Each still maintains a sacred fire, which was brought from the East during "Removal." Each ground is set up structurally as the ancient towns in Alabama and Georgia before the removal except for the mound or chooc-ofau thluc-co.

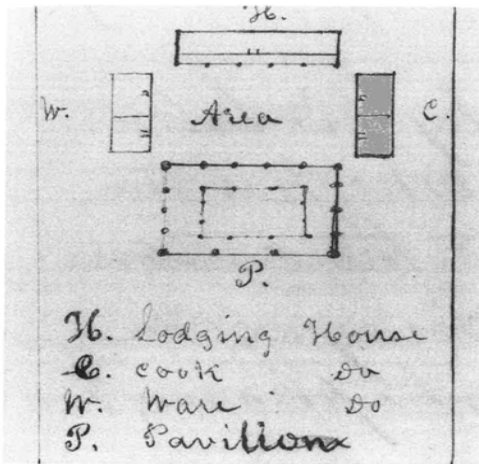


Figure 15. Edwin H. Davis's Copy of Bartram's Drawing of the Apalachicola Headman's Household. (courtesy, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution)

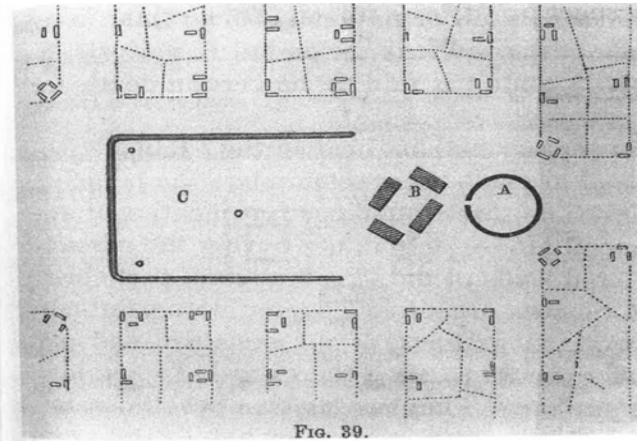


Figure 33. Ephraim G. Squier's Engraving of "Creek Towns and Dwellings" (from William Bartram, "Observation on the Creek and Cherokee Indians, 1789).

## BELIEFS

The Muscogulge, Mvskoke people, were spiritual people who believed in a higher power or deity, Ebofunga, 'the one who is above us', whose power was considered above all. They also believed that every living thing had a spirit including water, earth, wind and fire. It is believed that the knowledge and wisdom of the kerrv, prophet, and the healing knowledge of the helis haya, medicine men, were given to them by Ebofunga. The following are other beliefs that tribal traditionalist still consider their own.

- Tribal elders believe children are aware of the spiritual world, thereby, can see spiritual beings around them. They also believe children can sense the good and evil in a person. This is the reason a child might cry when a stranger approaches him.
- Muscogee (Creek) people anciently considered the younger of twins more likely to make an efficient KERRV, knower or prophet. Sometimes the child was kept from nursing for four days and was made to swallow certain small roots to make him live longer. The same effect was produced by keeping him indoors for four months so no one would see him.

- The number four is a sacred number among the Mvskoke people; not considered a “lucky” number. Everything is done according to this number whether a domestic activity, events, or dwellings. Ceremonies lasts four days, house posts are used in multiples of fours and burials are conducted on the fourth day. When the ‘heles haya’ drinks the ‘black drink’ of purification, smoking tobacco for protection, or bathing for cleansing; this was all done four times. The sacredness of the number four has been the traditional way of life for the Mvskoke people.
- Their mode of correction was singular: if a child required punishment, the mother scratched its leg or thigh with the point of a pin or needle until it bled; some kept a jaw-bone of a gar-fish, having two teeth, entirely for the purpose.
- Mvskoke stories were mostly for children, to amuse or discipline them. The characters were animals such as rabbit, who was known as a trickster. The storyteller would tell the moral at the end of a story to remind them to behave. Other stories were about the origin of the animals’ appearance or characteristic (ex: How Possum got His Bare Tail) while some stories told of the origin of the earth and its inhabitants.
- Legends were actually historical records told orally of the different tribes that later became part of the Muscogee (Creek) confederacy. The elder of a tribe would often tell the origin of his tribe and the events that led them to their place in history, each story being more convincing than the one before which led the listener to believe the story as truth. But nevertheless, each tribe had their own legend of their origin and migration.
- Tribal elders spoke to their newborn grandchild because they wanted Mvskoke to be the first language the child heard. Elders believed the spirit of the child would grasp the first sounds if heard more frequently during the first four days after birth. It was customary to speak to the child in Mvskoke throughout the child’s first year so he could hear and recognize the language. Thus, being able to speak Mvskoke is the way to preserve and promote the Mvskoke language for future generations.
- Creek men and women observed many signs and omens, which they believed could help them in predicting the future, assist them in daily activities, and set them on the right path of their life’s journey.
- The Creeks believe that the world was originally entirely underwater. The only land was a hill, called Nunne Chaha, and on the hill was a house, wherein lived Esaugetuh Emissie (“master of breath”). He created humanity from the clay on the hill.
- The Creeks also venerated the Horned Serpent, Sint Holo, who appeared to suitably wise young men. The shaman was called an Alektca.
- In the underworld, there was only chaos and odd creatures. Master of Breath created Brother Moon and Sister Sun, as well as the four directions to hold up the world.

- The first people were the offspring of Sister Sun and the Horned Serpent. These first two Creeks were Lucky Hunter and Corn Woman, denoting their respective roles in Creek Society.



A digital illustration of a S.E.C.C. Falcon Dancer by the artist Herb Roe, based on a whelk shell engraving from Spiro, Oklahoma.



Several S.E.C.C. Motifs on a ceremonial stone palette found at the Moundville Archaeological Site in Moundville, Alabama

## **GREEN CORN CEREMONY**

The Green Corn Ceremony is a celebration of the new corn and the New Year which lasts four days. It is a time of forgiveness and purification for both the ceremonial grounds and the Creek people. Old ways are cast aside as the New Year marks a fresh start and new beginning. Unlike the Europeans, the New Year begins in the month of July instead of January. Every aspect of the ceremony is symbolic of the purification and cleansing that takes place during this time.

The name of the ceremony refers to its connection with the annual harvest of the New (Green) Corn. The harvest usually occurs during July or August and no new corn is eaten before this time. Such thanksgiving and celebration of a single crop is not unusual considering its traditional importance. Corn was by far the most dependable food source as it produced even when other crops failed or hunting was unsuccessful. Corn could be prepared in a variety of ways and could be used in numerous dishes.

The ceremony is also referred to as the “Posketv” or “Busk” which means “to fast” which takes place mostly in the month of July. Fasting occurs in two ways; first, people abstain from eating new corn until the harvest celebration marked by the Green Corn and second, participants abstain from all food and consume only a traditional herbal drink on the day of the fast. The drink is a powerful emetic that serves to cleanse the body both physically and spiritually. The men are mainly the participants of the drink but women are allowed only to wash with it. According to traditionalists, the purpose of this medicine is to purify the people, so that they will be in an acceptable mental and physical state to receive the blessing of the New Year.

## ***DUTIES OF SURVIVAL***

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The Mvskoke people were very productive when it came to providing for their families. The men were hunters and sometimes went to war to protect their families. The women were farmers and also did most of the child care and cooking. Both genders took part in storytelling, artwork and music, and traditional medicine.

In the fall and winter season, the men would go hunting in the forests, while the women took care of the household. The principal occupations of the men were hunting, ball playing, war and rituals connected with the use of medicine and ceremonial affairs. They built the houses, the corncribs, and the structures belonging to the square ground, felled trees, made canoes and mortars, drums, pipes, calumets, ball sticks, axes, arrows, bows, war clubs and other articles used in hunting and war. When hunting at a distance from home, they cut up the meat, loaded it on horses, and brought it back to their families.

Everyone in the town helped in some way for it was a communal effort. The old men and young boys helped by hunting small game such as rabbits, squirrels and other small animals. The older boys, along with the men, were responsible for fishing and hunting.

During the fall, the women gathered nuts and acorns in large quantities to make oil for annual consumption in various dishes. When the men brought back the meat, they helped process the meat and preserved it for later consumption or stored it. The women also cut and brought home wood for the winter. They carried the wood from a great distance by toting it on their backs or sometimes they used horses. In addition to the indoor work of the women, they made all the pottery, baskets, spinning and weaving of bison hair, mulberry bark and other materials. The initial preparation of skins was sometimes performed by men, but most of the work fell to the women. They made drying frames and dried peaches and pounded the corn and did the cooking.

During the spring and summer the women and young girls picked wild grapes, blackberries, mulberries, strawberries, apples and plums. By fall, chestnuts, pecans, hickory nuts, black walnuts, and acorns were ready for gathering. Sunflower seeds were also easy to harvest and store for winter.

The Mvskoke men and women worked together although it may seem the women were working harder than the men. During the spring and summer the smaller gardens were tended by the women but the town fields were tended mostly by the men. At this time of the year, by a law of the people, they did not hunt; the game not being in season until after their crops or harvest were gathered.



## STOMP DANCE

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**Stomp Dance Circle**

Today the Mvskoke people are known for their stomp dances or ceremonial dances. These dances are the most traditional part of the Muscogee (Creek) culture which still exists even today. The dances take place at 16 different ceremonial (stomp) grounds beginning in late April to mid-October. Sometimes three or four grounds will have a dance at the same time during a weekend. Each ground will have at least four dances throughout the season, one of them being the Green Corn ceremony. Although all of the five tribes from the southeastern United States performed these dances before the removal, the Mvskoke people continue to dance as their ancestors danced for thousands of years.

Each of the traditional grounds areas are located on private land or allotment of their ancestor. Few are still on the same area of land as the time of arrival from the trail of removal. The location is known only to the dancers but not to the public or non-natives.



While the men sing, the women set the rhythm by shaking turtle shells worn on their legs. The shakers are made of turtle shells or small milk cans. Shakers develop their own style of shaking in speed and rhythm which coincides with the leader or singer. Young girls are taught to shake turtle shells or milk cans at an early age by the older women in their clan.

(Loca or shell shakers)

## TRADITIONAL FOODS

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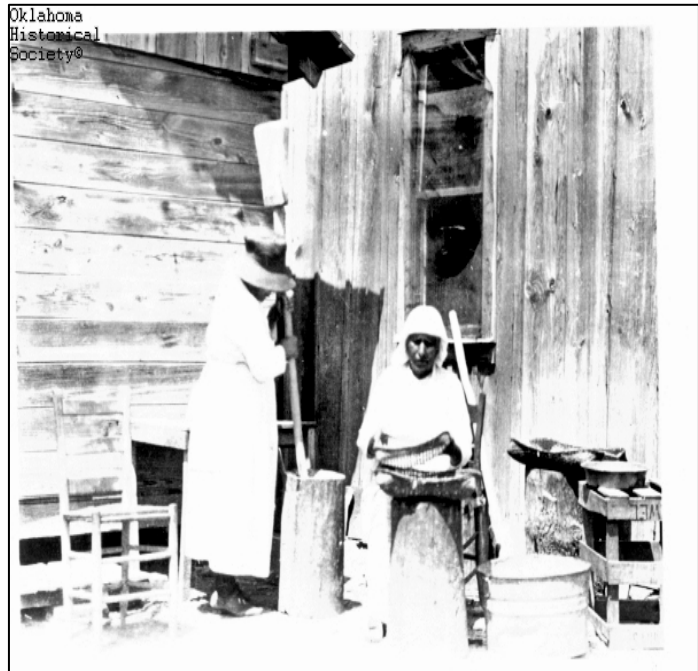
The Mvskoke people as a community were responsible for providing food for their families in such ways as hunting, fishing, farming and gathering of berries, nuts and other native vegetables or fruit. This way, food belonged to the entire community and everyone was fed. If for some reason a family did not have sufficient food, the clan members would share a portion of their food or provide for them in some way.

By 200 AD, the Creek were cultivating a variety of wild seed crops. After 800 AD, “modern” domesticated corn and beans were common throughout the Southeast. Wild gourds, sunflowers, and corn, or maize arrived from Mexico around 200 AD. It quickly became the most important vegetable food in the Creek diet, as they learned to prepare it in many ways and utilize it in dozens of unique dishes.

### **Safke**

Safke or osafke, is a hominy dish which can be cooked as soup or drink and enjoyed by the Muscogulge, Muscogee people. The drink is more watery and sweetened or seasoned to taste. It is best when fresh and warm. The soup is cooked thicker with meat, pork or beef and seasoned to taste. As a drink, some of the elders in years past preferred it fermented before drinking it. Whichever way, it is considered an acquired taste.

Safke is made by cooking white cracked flint corn in a large supply of water, flavored with lye made from wood ash. No other seasoning is used. The mixture is cooked over moderate heat for three to four hours.



(The picture's shows the women using the traditional *keco* and *kecvpe*, wood stump and pounder to pound safke.)

### **Wild Onion Dinners**

From February to April wild onions are picked for a major spring feast. Although it is common for all of the Five Tribes in eastern Oklahoma to have wild onion dinners, the Mvskoke people make this season a time of gathering and fellowship of family and friends. Wild onion dinners are held often during this time to raise funds for a church or other organization.

The onions are usually cooked with scrambled eggs and served along with several traditional dishes. Poke salad might be added to the onions, or it could be served alone. Corn breads, of various kinds are present; some are sour, dug-lake dōk-see (prepared with fermented meal) and another is flavored with parched purple pea hulls, chatta-hauga (blue bread). Hominy is cooked as stew, often containing pork. In recent times, fry bread made from wheat flour, has become popular. Red beans are a part of every wild onion dinner. Common meats such as *dō-see-na* (salt meat) and stewed beef are most delicious. Hickory nut soup is sometimes added to various dishes. Other foods might include fried chicken, rice, potatoes, cabbage, and crayfish. Grape dumplings are the traditional dessert, and various pies and cakes are present. Beverages include safke, abuske (parched corn mixed with water), iced tea, coffee, and soft drinks.



### **STICKBALL**

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Before the removal, the stickball game was the traditional game for all of the tribes in the southeastern United States. Although, the game was played by all, the Mvskoke people continue to play the game every fall as the last event before closing out the ceremonial dances. It was once called “Little Brother of War” by the Choctaws because the game was played to end a feud between the tribes.

It was a game with no rules; the player being a good ‘sport’ even when he was beaten. The game consisted of male players who only used sticks (*dō-gōn-hee*) made from hickory wood. Participants of the game were not allowed to use their hands to pick up the ball. A player had to be a swift runner and have the ability to move with such quickness to avoid being hit by his opponent.

The stick was carved out and curved on the end to form a netted scoop in which to catch the ball. The scoop was drilled with small holes. A thin string of leather was strung through the holes to form a net. Ball sticks were made only by the men to play in a social game with the women or the *dee-guh-bau-kee* (*stick ball game with the men*). These sticks were the men’s personal possession and only the men were allowed to touch them.

The ball was made by an elder man or the medicine man of the town using animal hair rolled up tightly and wrapped in deerskin and sewn onto the ball. A short string of leather was left hanging which was the “huh-chee”, tail. The average size of the ball was smaller than a tennis ball which made it very difficult to see when it landed on the ground.

The field on which the game was played was a rectangular area. The goals were horizontal poles supported on poles about twelve feet high. These were approximately one hundred fifty yards apart on which the players are assigned various positions. Each time the ball sails through the upright goals, a score is made. Twenty goals scored on either side wins the game.

## ***SONGS/HYMNS***

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Muscogee (Creek) people today still sing the Mvskoke hymns in the traditional churches which the elders believe their ancestors sung on the "Trail of Tears". Most of the hymns speak of encouragement and perseverance. The hymns are sung in the Mvskoke language with its own style and tune, sounding sad and lonesome while other hymns have a joyful tune.

Today, some hymns are converted from the English version into the Mvskoke language (ex: Amazing Grace) for the younger generation. This makes it easier for them to sing the hymns with the tune already in place. Although, the tune is the same, the words are not translated in the exact context as the English version but in similar words.

The songs for the ceremonial dances were quite different from the hymns. The men composed their own songs and only the men sing the songs during the dances. The songs were of joyful tunes and others were lonely tunes. Sometimes, it was a story of life's experience; a lover who has left, being away too long and longing to be back or just enjoying the fellowship of being around his clansmen or members of his tribal town. Today, chants are heard and not the stories but the rhythm of the shell shakers brings back memories of the old songs or stories.

## ***CHURCHES***

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The churches of the Mvskoke people began after the arrival of the Europeans in the early 1700s that were of different denominations. The most popular of all now among the Mvskoke people was the Baptist denomination. Although the Protestants and Methodists groups converted some of the Mvskoke people, most were active with the Baptist denomination. Several of the Mvskoke men later became Baptist missionaries or ministers.

During the mid-1800s in Indian Territory, the Mvskoke people did not desire the missionaries to teach their children the gospel or the English language. They believed the native language and culture would be lost if this continued. The missionaries were caught and whipped fifty lashes and forced to leave the territory. This punishment did not keep others from coming to Indian Territory. Later, there were several mission schools built to education the children into the white society using the bible teachings.

There were two names used for the Deity, or Great Spirit. Ebofunga ("the one who is sitting above (us)") is used by the traditionalists before the removal in Alabama and Georgia. Hisagita-imisi (meaning "preserver of breath"; also Hisakitaimisi) was later used by converted Christians. Whichever name is used, it has a reverence and respect for a higher power.

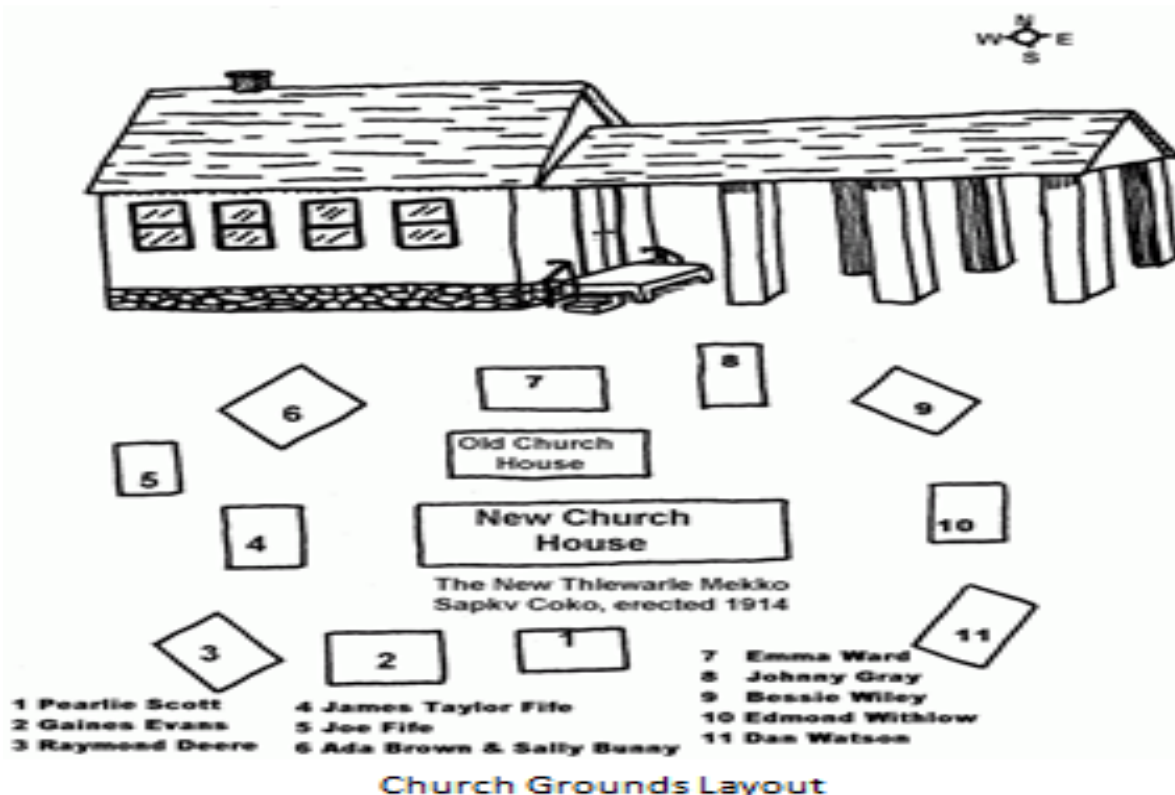


It is believed the first churches were built by tribal town members of the area because the names are the same as the tribal town. For instance, Weogofke church was near Weogofke tribal town, Hillabee church was near Hillabee tribal town and Asselanepe church was near Asselanepe tribal town. Today, the active tribal towns which are now known as ceremonial grounds are still located near the churches with same name.

The structural lay-out of the churches was the same as the sacred square ground which contained the sacred fire. The church faced east as did the Mekko's arbor and the camp houses were built around the church just as the houses were built around the sacred square ground. The similarity between the two was noticeable in every way.

Even the functions of the church were as the square ground although there may be some disagreement from the elders. The pastor's duties were similar to that of the Mekko except for dance. The pastor would lead a song then the congregation would follow his lead as in a dance. Deacons and women leaders also had similar duties of the warriors and women leaders of the traditional square ground.

Although the church had a great impact on the Mvskoke culture with its teachings, not all of the Mvskoke people were converted into their society. The traditionalist did not give up his ways; for the name for his deity will always be Ebofunga. He will continue to fast and dance by the sacred fire while praying on the sacred ground. The Christian will continue to call him, Hisagitaimisi by fasting and praying in his usual way.



# Muscogee Royalty

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**MUSCOGEE ROYALTY**

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***Shannon Barnett******Miss Muscogee (Creek) Nation*****Age: 23 years old****Hometown: Broken Arrow, OK****School: College of the Muscogee Nation,  
Associate in Tribal Services & Certificate in  
Mvskoke Language****Parents: Kay and Daniel Barnett****Clan: Bird****Tribal Town: Kialegee****Tribal Affiliations: Muscogee (Creek),  
Cherokee****Hobbies: Fast pitch softball and learning  
Muscogee language*****Madeline Gouge******Jr. Miss Muscogee (Creek) Nation*****Age: 16 years old****Hometown: Henryetta, OK****School: Henryetta High School****Church: Crosstown Church, Okmulgee, OK****Parents: Geebon and Jenna Gouge****Clan: Beaver****Tribal Town: Tulsa Canadian****Tribal Affiliations: Muscogee (Creek), Kiowa,  
Choctaw****Hobbies: Painting and drawing**



# Branches of Government

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## ***BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT***

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### **The Muscogee (Creek) Nation has three (3) branches of Government:**

1. Executive Branch
2. Judicial Branch
3. Legislative Branch

### **The Executive Branch consists of:**

- Principal Chief – James Floyd
- Second Chief – Louis Hicks
- Executive Director
- Chief of Staff

➤ Principal Chief and Second Chief currently serve four (4) year terms.

### **The Judicial Branch consists of:**

- Two (2) District Court Judges
- Six (6) Supreme Court Judges
- The District Court Judges and Supreme Court Judges are appointed by the Principal Chief and confirmed by the National Council.

➤ Supreme Court Judges serve six (6) year terms. District Court Judges serve four (4) year terms.

### **The Legislative Branch consists of:**

Sixteen (16) members of the National Council – The current National Council is in their Nineteenth session.

#### **Leadership of the National Council:**

- Speaker of the House
- Second Speaker
- Sergeant at Arms

➤ The National Council representatives currently serve four (4) year terms.  
➤ The National Council is elected by Muscogee citizens in an open election.  
➤ The National Council representatives are elected by districts within the boundaries of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

# Executive Branch

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***PRINCIPAL CHIEF JAMES FLOYD***

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Born: Oklahoma City, OK  
 Date: August 27, 1952  
 Parents: Mother - Margaret (Vickery) Floyd  
 Father - Joe Floyd (Fuco)(deceased)  
 Clan: Wind  
 Tribal Town: Koweta Tribal Town (inactive)  
 Ceremonial Ground: Tallahassee Wykokiye (active)  
 Indian name: Concharte  
 Church: Tuskegee Indian Baptist  
 Family: Married to Carol (Tustison) Floyd for 36 years  
 Children are Jacob, daughter Erin, son-in-law Lloyd  
 School: Eufaula High School Graduate (1970)  
 College: Oklahoma State University, AS, Civil Technology, 1978  
 Northeastern State University, BS, Health Care Administration 1982,  
 Portland State University, MPA/MHA, 1991



Experience: Muscogee (Creek) Nation:  
     Environmental Health Specialist, 1978-79  
     Supervisor, Health Services Administration 1979-1980  
     Manager, Health Services Administration 1982-1983  
     Director, Community Services, 1983-1986  
 U.S.P.H.S. Indian Health Service, Portland, OR:  
     Health System Specialist, 1986-1989  
     Associate Director, 1989-1992  
     Area Director, 1992-1987  
 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:  
     Medical Center Director, Salt Lake City, UT, 1997-2008  
     Network Director, VA Heartland Network, Kansas City, MO 2008-2012  
     Director, VA Eastern Oklahoma Health Care System, Muskogee, OK 2012-2015

Certification: Fellow, American College of Health Care Executives, since 2007  
 Interests: Hunting, Fishing, History, Genealogy, Music, Vinyl Record Collecting

## ***SECOND CHIEF LOUIS HICKS***

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Tribal Town – Atvse (inactive)/Arbeka (active)  
Clan – Fuswvlke (Bird)  
Church – Silver Springs Indian Baptist Church  
Place of Birth – Eram, Oklahoma  
Father – Houston Hicks (WWII veteran)  
Mother – Eliza (Freeman) Hicks  
Home – Okmulgee, OK

#### Military Career

1969-1972

Enlisted – 1969

Served in Vietnam with the 134th Assault Helicopter  
Company, 1st Aviation Brigade

Door Gunner/Crew Chief on UH1H Huey Helicopter

Awarded – Air Crewman Badge, Air Medal (14 times), Army  
Commendation Medal



#### Affiliations

All Indian Rodeo Association of Oklahoma

Oklahoma School Board Association

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 539

American Legion Post 213

Louis Hicks worked for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation from 2007 to December 2011 as the Director of the Human Development department. He supervised seven major programs: Muscogee Language Program, Higher Education, Johnson O'Malley, Head Start, Eufaula Dorms, Reintegration and Employment and Training.

He received his Associates Degree in Elementary Education in 1977 from Rose State College and his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Northeastern State University in 1979. In 1992 he received his Master of Science in Education (School Administration) from Northeastern State University. He has been married to Mrs. Gloria Hicks for 40 years. He is the father of seven children and grandfather to 16 grandchildren.

# Former Chiefs

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**Opothle Yahola**  
1828 to 1863



**Roley McIntosh**  
1828 to 1859



**Samuel Checote**  
1867 to 1875  
1879 to 1883



**Locher Harjo**  
1875 to 1876



**Ward Coachman**  
1876 to 1879



**Joseph M. Perryman**  
1883 to 1887



**Legus C. Perryman**  
1887 to 1895



**Edward Bullett**  
(Hutvlke Emarthla)  
1895



**Isparhecher**  
1895 to 1899

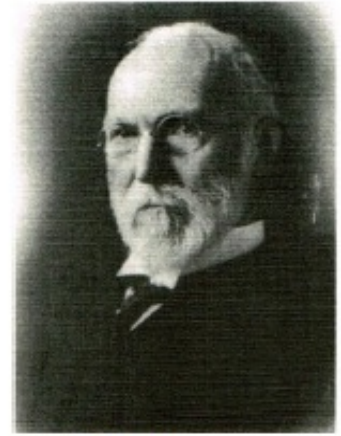




**Pleasant Porter**  
1899 to 1907



**Motey Tiger**  
1907 to 1917



**G.W. Grayson**  
1917 to 1920



**Washington Grayson**  
1921 to 1923



**George Hill**  
1923 to 1928



**Peter Ewing**  
1931



**Alex Noon**  
1939 to 1943



**Roley Canard**  
1935 to 1939  
1942 to 1950



**John F. Davis**  
1951 to 1955



**Roley Buck**  
1955 to 1957



**Turner Bear**  
1957 to 1961



**W.E. 'Dode' McIntosh**  
1961 to 1971



**Claude A. Cox**  
1971 to 1991



**Bill S. Fife**  
1992 to 1996



**R. Perry Beaver**  
1996 to 2004



**A.D. Ellis**  
2004 to 2012



**George Tiger**  
2012 to 2016

Photographs were not available for:  
Motey Canard - 1859-1863  
Echo Harjo - 1859-1867  
Henry Harjo - 1930

# District & Supreme Court

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***DISTRICT JUDGES***

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**Gregory H. Bigler**

*Euclaw : Enrolled with Muscogee  
(Creek) Nation. Member of the  
Polecat Euclaw stomp ground.  
Founder and Past Chair of  
Oklahoma Native Language  
Association.*

**John T. Cripps**

*Military: United States Army –  
Honorable Discharge Captain,  
Special Forces, Ranger  
Advisor/Trainer, Airborne  
Served in the United States,  
Germany and Viet Nam*

## ***SUPREME COURT***

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Standing: Chief Justice Adams, Justice Deer, Justice Lerblance, Vice-Chief Justice Thompson

Seated: Justice Harjo-Ware, Justice Supernaw

The Justices serve six year terms after nomination by the Principal Chief and confirmation by the National Council.

The court is vested with exclusive jurisdiction over all civil and criminal matters that are under Muscogee jurisdiction and serves as the final authority on Muscogee law.

# Legislative

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**NATIONAL COUNCIL**

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2015 - 2016 Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council

**Session**

Palen-Ostvpohaken (19)

***Under the guidance of the Almighty God, our Creator, We the People of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, do promote Unity, to establish Justice, and secure to ourselves and our children the blessings of Freedom, to preserve our basic Rights and Heritage, to strengthen and preserve self and local Government, in continued relations with the United States of America, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.***

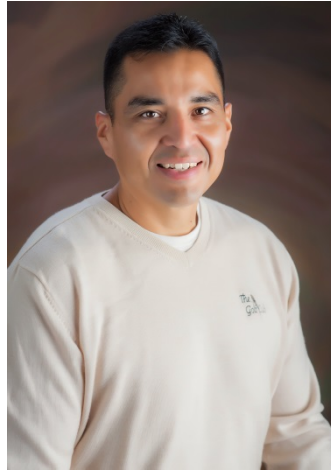


***DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES***

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Dode Barnett  
Creek District-Seat B



Del Beaver  
Okmulgee District-Seat A



Pete Beaver  
Muscogee District-Seat A



Joyce Deere  
Muscogee District-Seat B



Johnnie Greene  
Wagoner/Rogers/Mays District-Seat B



Randall Hicks  
Okfuskee District-Seat A



David Hill  
Creek District-Seat A



Robert Hufft  
Tulsa District-Seat A



Mitch Jack  
Okfuskee District-Seat B

***DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES***

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James Jennings  
Okmulgee District-Seat B



Adam Jones III  
McIntosh District-Seat B



Darrell Proctor  
McIntosh District-Seat A



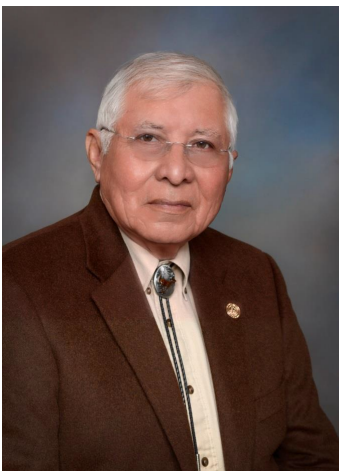
Mark Randolph  
Wagoner/Rogers/Mays District-Seat B



Rufus Scott  
Tukvpytce District-Seat A



Lucien Tiger  
Tulsa District-Seat B



Thomas Yahola  
Tukvpytce District-Seat B

***NATIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEES***

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**Health, Education & Welfare**

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**Land, Natural Resources & Cultural Preservation**

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**Business, Finance & Justice**

# How a Bill Becomes Law

## STEP ONE

- Proposed bill is given to Speaker

## STEP TWO

- Speaker assigns bill to appropriate committee

## STEP THREE

- Committee writes report on bill and forwards to National Council
- If bill has budget items it must be considered by the Business and Government Committee

## STEP FOUR

- National Council Approves Bill
- National Council forwards proposed bill to Principal Chief

## STEP FIVE

- Principal Chief approves bill
- Proposed Bill becomes law

# Muscogee (Creek) Nation Seal

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## ***MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION SEAL***

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The Muscogee Nation is a Confederacy of Muscogean towns originally from the Southeastern region of the United States. “Muscogee” refers to the predominant language spoken among these towns. The initials “I.T.” on the circular border stand for Indian Territory, the land that was promised to the Muscogee Nation and other tribal nations for “as long as the grass grows and the rivers flow”. On that promise the Muscogee Nation was forced to leave the Southeast in the early 1800’s on what has come to be known as the “Trail of Tears”.

The Muscogee people had been agriculturists since 900 A.D. Using tools hand-made from natural resources, they grew corn, beans and squash. After arriving in I.T., they resumed this practice. The center of the seal signifies the Muscogee’s agricultural background and the influence of Christianity. The sheaf of wheat refers to Joseph’s dream (Genesis 37:7), “For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright...” The plow depicts a prophecy (Amos 9:13), “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper...”

The Muscogee Nation National Council adopted this seal following the Civil War.

# Chronicles of Oklahoma

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# Chronicles of Oklahoma

## Volume 4, No. 4

### December, 1926

#### SAPULPA

#### William A. Sapulpa

The life of Sapulpa, for whom the City of Sapulpa was named, reads much like the lives of other active, virile men, whose lives have merited the confidence, honor and respect of their fellowmen. He was born in Alabama. Both his parents were full-blood Creeks. His father was O-M-I-Y-A, but his mother's name and the date of his birth are unknown to his posterity. Both his parents died in Alabama when he was but two or three years old and he and his three sisters were raised by his two uncles, brothers of his father. His boyhood and early youth were spent on the hunting grounds of their then Indian country, which extended from Florida to Mississippi and the encroachment of white settlers into that country brought him into conflict with the governmental authorities and the soldiers, so he was, for a time, what may be termed a wild Indian. It seems that the white settlers of those days (very much like some of the white settlers of later days), would not recognize the rights of Indians to any property whatsoever and proceeded to help themselves to stock belonging to the Indians. The Indians proceeded to retake as much of their stock as they could find and, perhaps, taking other stock in place of the stock not found. The white settlers, of course, chose to treat the Indians as cattle thieves and shot some of them. This conduct on the part of the white settlers so aroused the manly and racial instincts of young Sapulpa to action that brought the soldiers in pursuit of him; but he was too wily and fleet of foot for the soldier boys, so they never caught him. One incident of his experience with the soldiers that he often told to his children was this: While out hunting with some other men, in Florida, they saw the soldiers with blood hounds—and the pursuit was on. Young Sapulpa ran into a swamp, with the blood hounds and soldiers on his trail. Coming to a creek that ran into a lake, he saw a big alligator in the creek. If he stopped or turned back, the hounds and soldiers would get him, so he made a desperate jump over both the alligator and the creek. But the hounds and soldiers were not so fortunate—for when they arrived at the creek, the alligator put up such a hard fight that they gave up the chase.

And so the native of the swamps saved the native of the woods from his enemies.

The Creek Indians of those days often visited St. Augustine, Florida, where they did most of their trading. Here did also young Sapulpa go quite frequently and met and made many friends among the white people. His last trip to Ste. Augustine was his last trip from the old hunting grounds; for at Ste. Augustine some of his white friends induced him to go with them to Charleston, S. C. The trip was made by boat, and Mr. Sapulpa was treated to the sights of whales, etc., to be seen in the briny deep. Leaving Charleston, he continued by boat to New Orleans and then continued on to what later became the eastern part of the Creek Nation in what is now Oklahoma—thus becoming one of its pioneers and one of the leaders of his people. Soon after his arrival in the new country, he assumed the duties of a husband by marrying NaKitty, an Indian maiden, and, moving to what is now Creek County, he built his home and commenced farming on Rock Creek, about one mile southeast of Sapulpa. Sometime later, in about 1850, he started a store at his home, where he sold coffee, sugar, tobacco, dry goods, flour, spices and other articles too numerous to mention and hauling his goods in by team and pack horses from Ft. Smith and the old agency about 7 or 8 miles northwest of Muskogee. At the end of about two years he gave up merchandising on account of the difficulties of getting in his goods. There were no other stores in the neighborhood—the nearest stores being at the old agency, near Muskogee and at

Council Hill. There may be some old timers who remember when we had no railroads, no automobiles, no trucks, no interurban lines, no bridges over our streams —and no wagon roads fit to travel, but I think that the most of you would consider the traffic in merchandise, under such conditions, as unthinkable.

Three children were born of his marriage to NaKitty—James, Hanna and Sarah. Of these three, James and Sarah are still living. James Sapulpa lives about one mile south of Sapulpa, and Sarah is now the wife of Timmie Fife and lives within the city.

Sapulpa was married again to Cho-pok-sa, a sister of his first wife and by whom he had seven children—Moses, Yarna, Samuel, William, Rhoda, Becca and Nicey. All of these children are now dead, excepting William, who now is a farmer, and lives about two miles west of Sapulpa.

When the Civil War broke out, Sapulpa loaned \$1,000.00 in gold to the Confederate cause, receiving a note as evidence thereof, which note is still in existence and held for safe keeping. He joined the Creek Regiment of the Confederate Army, in which he served for three years and rose to the rank of first lieutenant, and was wounded in the battle of Elk Creek, near what is now Checotah, Oklahoma.

During the years 1871-73, about two or three hundred Osages used to come down here and camp, staying about two weeks at a time and traded with the Creeks, buying corn, sweet potatoes, peas, beans, peanuts, bacon, hogs and so forth. They put up their tepees on the land where the court house now stands and extending in a southeasterly direction about one-half mile.

In 1872, Mr. Sapulpa opened another store at his home on the hill southeast of what is now Sapulpa, buying and hauling his merchandise this time from Coffeyville, Kansas. But about a year later he closed out the business again, because of the difficulties of transportation. However, he had taken a deep interest in farming and stock raising and devoted his time, energy and talents to those industries with such success that, in due time, all the land within ten miles of his home was embraced in his ranch, and for several years he shipped cattle and hogs to the St. Louis market.

In about 1875, Mr. Sapulpa joined the Methodist Church South, and was an active member thereof from then until the time of his death and donated liberally with cattle, flour, coffee and sugar to feed the people at Camp Meetings, which always lasted several days.

In the early days, big game, consisting of antelopes, panthers, deer, buffalo, elk and bear was plentiful, and Mr. Sapulpa indulged his passionate fondness for hunting and exercised his great skill in the hunting of such game.

In about 1884 or 1885, the Frisco railroad completed the extension from Tulsa to Sapulpa and Mr. Sapulpa was invited by the Frisco officials to ride to Sapulpa on the first passenger train from Tulsa to Sapulpa.

I am pretty reliably informed that there was one store and one blacksmith shop at the end of what is now South Maple Street for several years before the Civil War, and that business was kept up there until the war broke out and that during the war all the buildings were burned.

The Okmulgee District Court of the Creek Nation was held about the year 1890 on or near the place where J. E. Rice now has his business at Park Street and Lee Avenue, and was presided over by William Anderson, as Judge, with Stand Watie as Prosecuting Attorney and myself, William Sapulpa, as Clerk of the Court.

Mr. Sapulpa was a member of the Coon Clan and his wives were members of the Fox Clan. He was a member of Osocheetown and in 1868 was elected by his town as a member of the House of Kings, which position of honor and trust he held until the date of his death, March 17, 1887.

Mr. Sapulpa was fond of the Indian ball game and was considered the best all round ball player on the Arkansas River.



**Chronicles of Oklahoma**  
**Volume 11, No. 3**  
**September, 1933**  
**THE CREEK INDIAN COUNCIL IN SESSION**

**By Alice Robertson**

Although the Capitol of the Creek Nation was established at Okmulgee in the year 1868, I had never been there when the Council was in session in the log Council House. In 1878 I was in Indian Territory on leave of absence from the Indian Department in Washington, where at that time I was employed as a clerk, and was visiting my parents at Tullahassee Mission when I had an opportunity to see the council in session.

Early one beautiful October morning my father and I left Tullahassee with the hack and a pair of Indian ponies,—in the vernacular of that time a hack was a strong, light spring wagon without cover. We crossed the Arkansas River at Henry Texas' ferry, superseded in recent years by what is known as Spaulding Bridge. The drive was one of great charm. We did not mind the open vehicle and our ponies made six miles an hour.

The tall prairie grass waved its russet sprays above golden rod and white and purple asters. At noon we stopped for dinner and to feed our ponies on Cane Creek, where Isaac Smith an enterprising Creek Freedman had built a cluster of log cabins which were the rooms of his hotel. He catered only to white and Indian travelers and patrons usually had a whole cabin to themselves. The cabins were fairly clean though sometimes the small pests, colloquially known as "chinchies", were annoying. Father and I spread blankets on the grass out under the trees, and while our noon day meal was prepared we indulged in a siesta in the warm October sunshine. Isaac's was notable for fried chicken with cream gravy, butter milk biscuits, fresh butter, preserves and of course plenty of coffee. After the ponies had finished their eight ears of corn apiece and all the hay they could eat, we paid two bits each for our dinner and two bits each for the ponies' dinner and went happily on our way, leaving Cane Creek bottom and driving west across the big prairie.

The first evidence that we were coming to Okmulgee as the sun began to drop toward the horizon, was the sight of Severs' pasture. This pasture was three miles square, with a split rail fence, nine rails high. In trading with the Indians Fred B. Severs bought small bunches of their surplus stock for which they took exchange in "store goods." These cattle then had the Severs' brand placed upon them and were turned into the pasture until a sufficiently large herd was ready for market. We forded Okmulgee Creek and went up the road past camps and camp houses to, Smiths' Hotel.

Smiths' Hotel was a rather large frame building a block from the Council house. A front room upstairs was assigned to me. It looked out on an upper porch and its windows were curtainless. Its furnishings comprised a low springless bedstead with a feather bed and pillows, one sheet, and a clean patchwork quilt; no mirror, no chair nor wash basin. Guests of the hotel were expected to perform their ablutions on the front porch, below, where there was a long shelf with buckets of water, gourd dippers, tin wash basins with one roller towel. I had prepared for such an emergency with a plentiful supply of soap and towels, so neither father nor I had to patronize the roller towel and I borrowed a basin so I got along very well. Out in front of the hotel, swinging from its iron frame on a high post was an iron plantation bell. A vigorous pulling of the attached rope was the signal to the town that it was meal time.

Meals at Smiths' Hotel were two bits but there were boarding places at which meals could be had for fifteen and twenty cents and not bad meals either. Each breakfast and supper at Smiths' was a replica of the others, everything that could be fried was fried, bacon, eggs, ham, potatoes, corn, etc. At dinner most foods were boiled but there was often barbecued pork or beef, and chicken appeared with dumplings and gravy. For anyone who asked there were Indian dishes, sofkey, tuklike, tooksey, ahpuskey etc. There was always coffee to drink and water if you asked for it, but it was customary to patronize the dippers in the water buckets on the front porch after each meal.

At early candlelight the Council House bell rang and in the dimly lighted hall I went with my father up the steps of the new Council House, recently completed, and used for the first time at this meeting of the Council. Hymns in their own language were being sung as a congregation gathered in the Hall of the lower house of the Warriors, The "Tustenukkulkee". Men, women and children drifted in during the singing, then a man began to pray and everybody knelt down. The service was entirely in Creek, and the Preacher was the President of the House of Kings, The "Mekkulkee", always addressed as "Liketuh Ohliketuh". The Reverend James McHenry, a notably outstanding character, was the son of a Scotch father and Indian mother. During the bloody Creek war which led to the conquering of the Creek people and their exile to Indian Territory, McHenry was a fearless fighter. He foiled all attempts to entrap him and even a standing reward of \$1500.00 for him, dead or alive, failed to bring results. Finally taken however he was carried with his exiled brethren to Indian Territory where he began a new life. He was converted and went into the Methodist Church and was duly licensed and ordained as a minister. He had received a rudimentary education in English. No longer an outlaw, he was a leader of his people, a zealous Christian soldier. The service he conducted was not long, for the village kept early hours.

At six the next morning when Smiths' bell told that breakfast was ready; I got up and joined my father downstairs in time for bacon and eggs, hot biscuit, fried chicken and all the rest. Then we walked around awhile exchanging greetings with our Indian friends. At a quarter of nine the Council House bell rang. We had gone a little earlier to pay our respects to the Principal Chief, the "Mekko Hlakko", in the executive office. Ward Coachman was a man of much ability who was born in the "Old Nation" in Alabama and educated there before following his people west. He was a member of the Alabama Creeks and spoke English, Creek and Alabaman with equal fluency and our interview was a pleasant one. From the executive office we went across the hall to the office of the committee on schools where father placed on file his reports of Tullahassee Mission and left his books for financial audit and approval that the treasurer might issue a warrant for funds. The Contract under which Tullahassee was operated provided a division of expense between the Mission Board and the Creek Nation.

Then we went upstairs to the House of Kings. The "Light Horse" who acted as doorkeeper admitted us and gave us seats to the left of the dais, on which was the desk of Mekko McHenry. We watched the routine business of the morning hour. Then Mekko McHenry with great dignity and eloquence of voice and gesture made a personal address which brought a smile of gratification to father's face and embarrassed blushes to mine. With the musical style of Creek oratory he was describing to the Mekkulkee the good works of the Robertson family and their accomplishments for the welfare of the Creek people. The young woman present with her father, he said, was a great friend to the Muskogee people in Washington where she worked for Wuhins Mokko, the Government, and had done many things helping them. Especially he enlarged upon the recent contest among themselves in the election for chief where the papers seemed to have been laid aside and forgotten.

All the public life was at a standstill. Their treasury was empty, their Courts and schools were without funds; even the community blacksmiths had no funds till there should be legal recognition of their government and

officials through whom the funds should be paid. Though as they saw she was just a girl, she had interceded, and had been allowed, upon examination of their papers, to write a report which had been adopted, the rightful government had been recognized, and peace came to their people. Then his gavel called all to their feet and as father and daughter stood he led the stately stepping band of Indian Kings through their ceremony of presentation and hand shaking, all returning to their places and remaining standing until the fall of the gavel permitted them to be seated. This was an honor never bestowed upon a woman before.

**Chronicles of Oklahoma**  
**Volume 13, No. 2**  
**June, 1935**  
**THE OLD COUNCIL HOUSE**

**By George Riley Hall**



The session of the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Historical Society, which met at Okmulgee, May 10 and 11, 1935, was held in the Old Council House of the Creek Nation.

While this building is not as old as some other structures in the old Indian Territory, yet it is one of the most interesting, picturesque and historic places in the State of Oklahoma. It was, at one time, Capitol of the Creek Nation.

In this old building are the rooms where the different departments of the Creek government were administered; here are the halls where the sessions of the two branches of their legislature were held before Oklahoma became a state and their remnant of sovereignty merged into that of the Sovereign State of Oklahoma. It was not "the Senate and the House" in the Creek government, but the "House of Warriors" and the "House of Kings."

# Chronicles of Oklahoma

## Volume 40, No. 2

### 1962

## Thomas Gilcrease

By: Martin Wenger

Thomas Gilcrease, a well-known oilman of Creek Indian, descent and the founder of the Gilcrease Museum at Tulsa keenly appreciated his American heritage. Early in life he commenced to assemble the remarkable collection of paintings, sculpture, books, manuscripts and artifacts pertaining to the American Indian and the American frontier which has come to be recognized as the Nation's most outstanding collection of its kind. Thomas Gilcrease was born in Robilene, Louisiana, on February 8, 1890, one of the large family of children of William and Elizabeth (Nee Vowel1) Gilcrease. When Thomas was a few months old, the family moved to Eufaula, Indian Territory, for Mrs. Gilcrease was of Creek Indian descent which gave her and her children land rights in the Creek Nation. A year later, they settled on a farm just south of Ball Mountain where they were neighbors to the Posey family. Thomas Gilcrease attended his first school in this community, taught by Alexander Posey, later the noted Creek poet in Oklahoma history. In about 1898, the Gilcrease family moved farther west to the Twin Mounds, in present Creek County, where they took their allotments of land the time the tribal rolls and allotments in severalty were made in the Creek Nation. William Gilcrease opened a little grocery store at the Twin Mounds, and later owned two cotton gins and a grist mill in the vicinity. In 1904, he moved his family to Wealaka, an old post office in the Creek Nation where he laid out a townsite and became postmaster and opened a general merchandise store. His son Thomas as a boy picked cotton and drove a wagon and team on the farms; later he worked in the cotton gins and in the store and post office at Wealaka. Oil was struck four miles from the 160 acre allotment of Thomas Gilcrease in 1905, and his land was soon in the famous Glen Pool of the great Mid-Continent Oil Field that pushed Tulsa on its way to become the "Oil Capital of the World." Young Gilcrease had thirty-two producing oil wells on his 160 acre allotment by 1917. He attended Bacone College at Muskogee, Indian Territory in 1907-08, soon after oil was struck on his land. A few years later, he attended the State Teachers College at Emporia, Kansas. He moved to Tulsa in 1908, which was really his home throughout his lifetime though he lived in California a short time; he also lived in San Antonio for a period of years, and traveled abroad for many years. Thomas Gilcrease carried on his own business interests at an early age-fanning, ranching and dealing in real estate. He purchased land two and one half miles northwest of Tulsa in Blackdog Township, of Osage County in 1912, where he built a large home and bought his first oil painting, Rural Courtship by Ridgway Knight.

Young Gilcrease had started his own oil business and entered the field of banking at the age of twenty-one. He soon owned a large interest in the bank now known as the Fourth National Bank at Tulsa, also owned outright the Bank of Bixby, the State Bank of Wagoner, the State Bank of Coweta and also, at one time, the largest bank in Stillwater.

Mr. Gilcrease formed the Gilcrease Oil Company at Tulsa in 1922. The Company brought in the first oil producer in South Central Oklahoma soon afterward, and it was during these oil omrations that Mr. Gilcrease discovered a new oil producing strata which is known today as the Gilcrease sand. This spurred the development of the oil pools in this art of Oklahoma such as the Papoose, Sasakwa, Wewoka and others. The Gilcrease Oil Concave established an office in San Antonio in 1936, and operated in the East Texas Field. South to the Rio Grande River, west to New Mexico as well as in North Texas, Southern Oklahoma and Kansas. Later, Mr. Gilcrease also established an office in Europe. He started his extensive traveling abroad in 1925. It was in



this that his interest in American culture intensified, and he accelerated his activities in collecting rare objects of art, paintings, books and manuscripts. His visits in Europe taught him that knowledge of civilizations is established by the things that remain from them. It was in Paris that he determined to assemble a record of the American Indian including the pre-historic period which could be obtained only by archaeological explorations. Much of his time during the last years of his life was spent personally excavating remains of ancient Indian cultures.

The Thomas Gilcrease Foundation was established in 1942, "to maintain an art gallery, museum and library devoted to the permanent preservation for free and public use and enjoyment of the artistic, cultural and historical records of the American Indian." A building was constructed of native sandstone by Indian artisans on land near the Gilcrease home, and the museum was opened by a formal dedication ceremony May 3, 1949. Mr. Gilcrease presented the museum collections to the City of Tulsa in 1955. He also deeded the building and thirteen acres of land surrounding it to the city three years later. Since then, the fame of the Gilcrease Collection has grown rapidly. Visitors have come from all parts of the world to see this great museum, now officially known as the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art of Tulsa. Thomas Gilcrease passed away in the morning of Sunday, May 6, 1962, from the effects of a stroke suffered a few hours earlier. Memorial services were held on the lawn in front of his home overlooking the skyline of Tulsa on the following Wednesday. The Reverend Guy Tetrick of the Methodist Church officiated at the services which were highlighted by a eulogy written and delivered by David R. Milsten. Indian burial rites were conducted by Chief Dode McIntosh of the Creeks, Wolfrobe Hunt and other Indian friends. Burial will be in a mausoleum to be constructed nearby. Mr. Gilcrease was married twice, and is survived by two sons, Thomas, Jr., and Barton of San Antonio, Texas; and a daughter, Des Cygne Gilcrease Denney of Palos Verdes Estates, California. A friend tells that Mr. Gilcrease once said that of all the things he had ever done, the most useful to the most people something that will bring pleasure and knowledge-had been the founding of the library and art gallery of the museum. "It is my aim always to leave something more beautiful than I found it," he remarked. Thomas Gilcrease enjoyed a rich and happy life that started from humble beginnings. He gave to Oklahoma and America a gift of immeasurable value. He appreciated the ideals and the spirit of the American tradition. He appreciated them so much that he has left for posterity a marvelous and vital presentation of our American heritage that will continue to instill a greater understanding and respect for these ideals in all time to come.

# BELVIN HILL SCHOLARSHIP

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## THE BELVIN HILL CHALLENGE BOWL SCHOLARSHIP

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Belvin Hill was born and raised in the Eufaula, Oklahoma area. He was the son of Belvin Jesse Hill and Medella Hill and of the deer clan. He graduated from Eufaula high school in 1970 and went on to receive his Bachelor degree in Education from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK. He received his masters in Divinity/Religious Education from Mid-western Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

In 2000, Belvin became the Muscogee (Creek) Nation JOM Programs Field Specialist and one of the original founding members of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Challenge Bowl. He gave workshop presentations at the Statewide JOM Conferences and National JOM Conferences. It was not unusual for him to assist a JOM program from a different tribe in a different state. He shared his knowledge and his training materials with all who were in need.

Belvin Hill, 1952-2006 He was part of establishing the MCN JOM reputation of excellence in technical training for JOM programs on a national level. His love for children showed through each and every day. He was in charge of the meals for Challenge Bowl making sure that each child was ready for the competition. At times you could find him serving breakfast and lunch out under a tent pitched behind the Mound building at the Creek Complex in Okmulgee. He went out of his way to make sure that the students and sponsors felt welcomed to the Challenge Bowl competition. He always had a smile and a handshake for all. He was a loving man who always took the time to talk to the students and throw in a life lesson while he was at it.

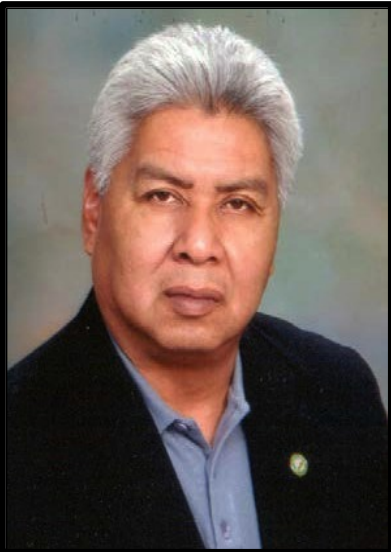
In 2006, the Challenge Bowl Committee honored Belvin by setting up a scholarship in his name in the amount of \$500 to a graduating senior who participates in the Challenge Bowl their senior year. This scholarship is based on the students' participation and their essay on "Why the Challenge Bowl is important to me". Our hope is to keep Belvin's spirit of learning alive by providing this small scholarship to students who understand the true meaning behind the Muscogee's Nations Challenge Bowl.

# WILBUR CHEBON GOUGE HONORS TEAM

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## THE WILBUR CHEBON GOUGE HONORS TEAM AWARD

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Wilbur Chebon Gouge  
1951-2008

Wilbur Gouge was born and raised in Hanna, Oklahoma and the son of the late Albert and Sally (Spaniard) Gouge. He graduated from Capitol Hill high school in 1969 and went on to Haskell Indian Junior College. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps and received an Honorable Discharge in 1974. He is a member of the Deer Clan and a member of the Weogufkee (Muddy Waters) Ceremonial Ground and attended Arbeka Ceremonial Ground.

Wilbur Gouge served on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's National Council for five sessions serving in the offices of Speaker and Second Speaker along with chairing the Human Development Committee. His last position held within Creek Nation was as the Grant Compliance Officer in the NAHASDA Program.

While on the National Council, he brought a sense of tradition to the Council floor by reminding the representatives of the foundation our ancestors laid before them. As Speaker of the House, he would greet everyone in the Muscogee language and interpret for the elders what actions were being taken. While on the National Council he became a founding member of the MCN Challenge Bowl Committee. He became the traditional advisor for the games and made sure that the competition didn't over-ride the true spirit of the games – the spirit of learning. His love for the games showed in his commitment to teach the volunteers and students that if you know where you come from, you will know where you are going.

In 2007, the Challenge Bowl committee officially named the sportsmanship award the "Wilbur Chebon Gouge Honors Teams Award" to honor him for his contribution to the betterment of this Nation. For generations to come, children will know his name, benefit from his knowledge and credit him for teaching them what it truly means to be a noble Creek citizen.

In 2008, the Muscogee Nation honored him as a Living Legend to acknowledge his years of work and dedication to the Muscogee people. Chebon has been recognized as one of the leading forces behind making Creek Nation more accessible to our youth, parents, community members and employees. On every committee that Mr. Gouge participated in, he kept them grounded by making the Creek culture the focal point of the program or events. From the writings of Wilbur Gouge; "As a role model for the next group behind you, how many will you inspire? How many will follow in your footsteps? Let's hope and pray there will be many."

The true meaning of the Challenge Bowl games is to teach our children the Creek culture, history, government and language using traditional values of brotherhood as the foundation. The Challenge Bowl was never set up to teach our children how to win in competitions but how to learn, share and be grateful to those willing to teach them. The Challenge Bowl Committee under Wilbur Gouge's leadership set out to have a competition unlike any other academic bowl in the nation. The Challenge Bowl Committee made a commitment to set by example positive role models in good citizenship and tribal pride that would carry on throughout the year, not just during the few days of competition. We set out to teach life skills of good manners, respect shown to others and self-worth even if participants do not place in the top three teams.

The "Wilbur Gouge Honors Team Award" is given in each of the three divisions, Elementary-Middle School-



High School. This award is presented to the one team who best exemplifies the true spirit of the games; knowing how to greet their tribal leadership, acknowledge their elders, show respect to their peers, showing honor in defeat, playing for the love of learning and not just to win a trophy or medal.

In the Spirit of the Wilbur “Chebon” Gouge Honors Team Award, we say Mvto for your congeniality and for your dedication to learning about our Great Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

# Legends & Stories

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## ***RABBIT PLAYS A GAME WITH WILDCAT***

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Cufe was hopping down a trail one day when he saw a track in the sand. He looked at it and said: "That animal has no claws like these," as he held up one of his forefeet and looked with admiration at his claws.

Cufe went on down the trail and soon he saw kowakuce, *gōwahgooch*, who was sitting in the trail.

"Sure enough," he said to himself, "he has no claws. He is the animal that made the tracks. I will have a little fun out of him."

"Let's play scratch," said Cufe to kowakuce.

Kowakuce smiled and said, "Very well."

"I will have the first scratch," insisted Cufe.

"Alright.", said Kowakuce calmly.

So Cufe hopped close to Kowakuce's back and gave his hardest and deepest scratch. Then he looked at his claws, expecting to see them full of hair, but not a single hair did he scratch out.

"Well, he has no claws so he can't hurt me," thought Cufe.

"Now it's your turn." Cufe called to Kowakuce, as he turned his back to him.

Kowakuce reached out one of his forefeet and gave a quick grab at Cufe's back and jerked the skin from his body. (Others say he jerked his tail off)

(Everyone except Cufe knows that all cats have claws; they just don't show them all the time.)

## ***THE WATER PEOPLE***

---

A boy carrying his bow and arrows was walking about near the water, when two women standing close to the shore said, "Follow us." Then he leaned his bow up against a tree and followed them, and presently those women said, "We are going down into the water. Go down in with us." So saying, they started on, and just as they had said, they presently went down into the water, that boy with them.

When all got in, the bottom was as if there were no water there, and before they had gone far they came to where there were some old water people. Those old men said, "There is a chair. Sit down." The chair they thus indicated to him was a very big water turtle. "They spoke to me," the youth said "and I sat down and they said 'Do you want to lie down? There is a bed. You must lie down. The tree-tyer [i. e., tie-snake] there is the bed,' they said to me.

Later they said, 'You can go hunting if you want to.' 'I cannot go hunting because I have no gun.' But the old men said, 'Go about hunting, and when you fall down somewhere come back.' After they had said this to me I set out, and while I was walking around, there was a rumbling noise and I fell down. I lay there for a while, and then came to my senses and returned to them.

When I got back the old men said, 'What did you kill?' 'I killed nothing' I answered, 'but I fell down and was unconscious. After I had lain there for a while I came back, but I did not kill anything.' 'Let us go and look at the place where you fell,' said those old men. Immediately we started, and when we got there, a very big thing of some sort was lying there dead. 'It is just as we said,' said they, and they brought it back, Then they ate.

After I had been there for a while those old men said, 'If you want to go, you may,' and I said, 'I will go.' 'You take him back,' they said to someone, and just as I thought, 'They are going to take me along' I lost consciousness.

Next I came to my senses standing close to the water, exactly where I had been when they took me off. 'My bow is standing up against a tree,' I thought, and when I got to the place, there it was just as I had thought, and I took it and started off. When I got to the place where my people lived, they were there. Then they said, 'The one who has been lost for such a long time is back.' The old men compounded medicine for me and after a while I got well," said the boy. They used to tell it so.

### ***LITTLE JACK***

---

During the journey of the removal from Alabama to Indian Territory, family members have written stories about a little boy who they say was marked by special powers. Little Jack and his family along with several families traveled many days before they came to the Mississippi river. There at the crossing, he almost lost his life.

Little Jack had walked along with his family for many days. His shoes were worn out and he suffered from the cold and hunger. Someone offered him a pony to ride.

When they came to the Mississippi crossing, the current of the river was very strong but everyone had to cross somehow. Some of the people went across in boats; others had to cross on their horses. Little Jack wanted to go on the boat but he didn't want to leave his pony.

Little Jack stood on the bank with his pony. He watched the elders at the water's edge praying for the safety of their people. The leader's horses plunged into the water. Other riders followed. Huge logs ere careening down the river. Before his very eyes, men and horses were being disastrously carried downstream, pulled under and dragged to the bottom.

"Let's go!" the lieutenant shouted. Soon it was little Jack's turn to cross the river. Riders reaching the far bank turned to watch the little boy and his pony. Jack nudged his pony into the water. Soon everyone was watching little Jack cross the river. Midway, something knocked him off the horse. He was swallowing water and gulping for air. Though concerned for the boy, the water raged so violently that no one could help the boy now. Somehow he was able to grab the pony's tail. The pony struggled through the heavy current until he was able to stand and walk to shore. Jack! Men lifted the boy in their arms. He had made it! Those who watched the boy crossing the raging river remarked about seeing a tiny man sitting on the head of that pony. That was strange but the little man was also directing the pony across the raging river with little Jack in tow.

It took a while for the ones swept the farthest to return upstream. In gratitude, everyone gathered that evening on the west bank. The tradition was to change the name of a child or man when something

important happened in his life. Names were never given for a lifetime, but earned by deeds. Jack's new name was "Jock-o-gee". Their mind says "Jack" but their tongue says "Jock", "Gee" means "little". This modest name would mark a small boy who overcame a mighty river. The name had a second unspoken but more powerful meaning. All knew of the 'little people' but no one had seen them for at least four generations. Yet, it was clear that the mark of the Great Spirit and the 'little people' were on Jock-O-Gee. No one dare to speak the river's name. "Gee" was as close as they dared to speak the full name of the 'little people.' The Knowledge and protection by the 'little people' reside with peace-makers. From the day the river was crossed, "they" were with Jock-O-Gee, teaching him how to heal the sick people in the new land with new herbs and plants.

### ***THE ANIMAL HELPERS***

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A man on a considerable journey stopped to eat his lunch beside a creek. Then a big black Ant came out and said, "Give me a piece of bread. Sometime I may help you out of trouble." So he gave it some bread. By and by he heard some talking in the water, and some small Minnows came up and said the same thing. He gave the Minnows some bread also. Then a red-headed Woodpecker came and asked for bread, which he again gave to it.

After this the man went on again and came to a town (talofa). There was a lot of wheat at a certain place in that town, and the people told him that he must move it and put it in barrels by morning or they would kill him. So they tied him down on the wheat and went away. By and by up came the black Ant which he had fed and asked him what the matter was. The man told him, and the Ant immediately went away and brought back a multitude of Ants, who soon had the barrels full. Next morning the people paid him for what he had done, but said that the next night he must dig up a certain tree, root and all, or they would kill him.

This time the Woodpecker came to him and asked what the matter was. "I am in trouble," he said, and he related what had been imposed upon him. Then the Woodpecker flew up and told the lightning and the lightning came down and tore the tree up, roots and all, so that in the morning the people paid him for that. They told him, however, that a horse loaded with gold had been drowned in a neighboring creek and that they would spare him if he found it by the following morning. So they tied him again and laid him on the bank of the creek. By and by the little Fishes he had fed came and said, "My friend, what is the matter with you?" He told them, and they went down and brought all the money to land, but they said that they could not get the horse for the snakes (\*hotisågi) alone could do that, and they were only orderlies (\*hola`tålgı). They made a pillow of the sack of gold under his head. The town people paid him for all the work he had done, and he went home a rich man.

\*This seems to be a metaphorical term meaning "those one is afraid of." Tcitto is the usual word for snake.

### ***RABBIT GETS A TURKEY FOR WILDCAT***

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A Rabbit was overtaken by a Wildcat, who threatened to kill and eat him. The Rabbit said: "Do not kill me; I will bring you a turkey." The Wildcat consented to let Rabbit try, so he ran into the woods to find the turkey, first telling the Wildcat to lie down and pretend he was dead.



Rabbit soon found some Turkeys and told them the Wildcat was dead and proposed that they all go and dance and sing around his body. The Turkeys agreed and went with Rabbit and when they saw the Wildcat's body stretched on the ground and his mouth and eyes looking white as if he were flyblown (for Rabbit had rubbed rotten wood on the edges of his eyes and mouth) they were satisfied that he was really dead.

Rabbit took his place at the head of the Wildcat and began to beat his drum and to sing while the Turkeys danced around him.

After the song and dance had continued a while they heard Rabbit sing:

"Jump up and catch the red leg, Jump up and catch the red leg."

"Why, he is dead and cannot jump," they said, but they objected, so he promised not to say that any more.

So Cufe (choo fē) sang and drummed away and the Turkeys again danced around their enemy's body; but soon Chaffee sang in a low tone:

"Jump up and catch the biggest, Jump up and catch the biggest."

The Turkeys stopped their dance, but too late, for the Wildcat jumped up and caught the biggest gobbler. Rabbit ran away to the woods and the Turkeys pursued him, threatening to kill him for his trickery. They chased him round and round the trees till at last one of the Turkeys bit at his long tail and bit it off, and ever since that time all rabbits have had short tails.

### ***DEER RACES TERRAPIN***

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One day the Deer was lying in the grass chewing his cud, when a Terrapin crawled near. The Deer looked at him moving slowly along, and said: "Why, brother Terrapin, you crawl as though you are sick. Why don't you go faster?"

"Oh, brother Deer, I like to go this way. I can run fast, and I can beat you running," replied the Terrapin. The Deer laughed. "When do you want to try it?" he asked.

"Anytime, how will tomorrow suit you?" responded the Terrapin. So it was agreed that they should have the race the following day. They selected the ground and chose the Rabbit as judge.

The Terrapin went to see all his friends that evening and told them that the honor of the family was at stake and appealed to them to aid in maintaining it. They all agreed to help him.

"Now here is my plan," Loca said. "I will meet the Deer tomorrow on the ground we picked out, and tell him I prefer to run through the grass and let him run along the trail. Well, this is the way we can beat him. I will start off at the word through the grass and you will be stationed in the grass along the way, and when you hear the Deer running on the trail, you can run a little way and stop. If the Deer calls out 'Oh, brother Terrapin, where are you?' you can tell him 'Here I am crawling along in the grass,' and the last one can crawl up to where the Rabbit will be sitting, when he hears the Deer coming, and claim the race."

They all agreed that this was a fine plan, except the Terrapin who was assigned to the last station, and he said the Deer would know he was not the same Terrapin and would suspect some trick. So the first and the last Terrapin exchanged places, the last being cautioned to hide in the grass near the starting place so that the Deer could not see him plainly. They separated and the Terrapins all took their places along the race course.

The next day the Deer galloped over the prairie and, reaching the starting point, called out: "Oh, brother Terrapin, where are you?" "Here I am," answered the Terrapin hiding in the grass. "Well, are you ready?" asked the Deer. "Yes," said the Terrapin, and at the word the Deer leaped forward. Hearing no sound in the grass after going some distance, he called out, "Where are you, brother Terrapin?" One of the Terrapins answered, "Here I am down in the grass crawling along."

The Deer was surprised, so he ran faster and called out, "Oh, brother Terrapin, where are you?" Another Terrapin answered, "Here I am, just a-crawling through the grass." So the Deer ran with all his might and did not stop till he reached the Rabbit. But just as he thought he had won the race, he saw the Terrapin crawl up to the end of the course. The Rabbit decided that the Terrapin had won.

# Muscogee Authors & Artisans

## Section 1 - Authors

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## ALEXANDER POSEY (1873-1908)

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**Early Life** – Alexander Posey was born on August 3, 1873, near Eufaula, Oklahoma. He was the oldest of twelve children. His parents were Lewis Hence Posey, who was Scots-Irish, and Nancy Phillips Posey (Creek name Pohas Harjo), who was Muscogee Creek. Posey was a Wind Clan member of Tuskegee.

Although Posey’s father, named Lewis H. Posey, was born to European-American parents, he called himself Creek. Lewis H. Posey was raised in the Creek Nation and he spoke the Muscogee language. He was a member of the Broken Arrow tribal town. When Alexander Posey was fourteen, his father only let him speak English and punished him if he spoke in his native language.

In 1896, Posey married Minnie Harris, a schoolteacher. Together they had three children, Yahola Irving, Pachina Kipling and Wynema Torrans, each with a middle name matching Posey’s favorite authors.

**Career** – Posey went to college, including three years at Bacone Indian University in Muskogee, Oklahoma where he studied writing. He read books by John Burroughs and Henry David Thoreau, who inspired him to write about the landscape of his childhood.

Posey worked at the *Indian Journal*, where he published poems. In 1895, he became a member of the Creek National Council. He was also the director of the Creek Orphanage. In 1901, Posey edited the *Eufaula Indian Journal* and received national recognition for founding the first Indian-published daily newspaper. Posey was secretary for the Sequoyah Constitutional Convention in 1906. According to the *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma*, he is credited with having written most of that constitution. Posey was also superintendent of the school at Wetumka mission.

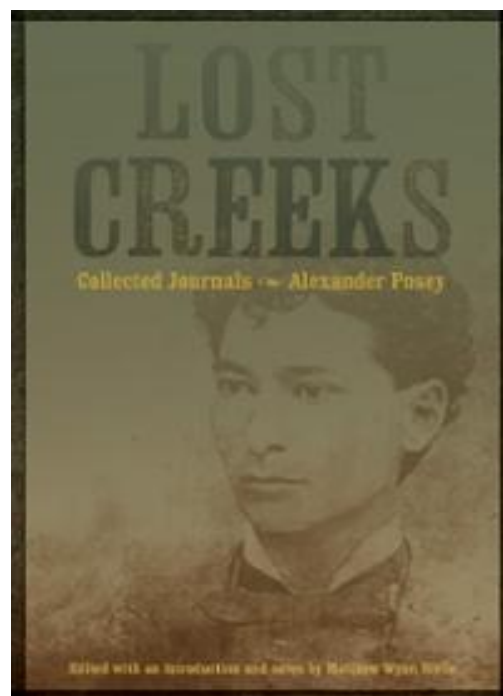
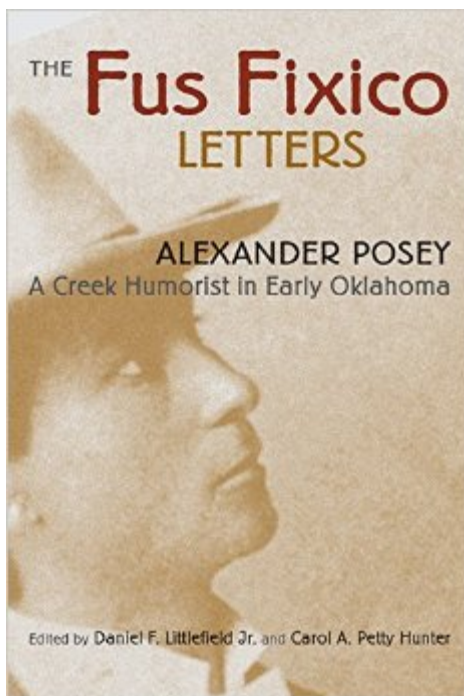
Posey created a fictional person by the name of Fus Fixico, Muscogee Creek for “Hearless Bird”. Fus Fixico’s wrote letters which were published in the *Indian Journal*. He was a full blood Muscogee traditionalist. He wrote letters about his everyday life or detailed accounts that he had heard from the fictional Muscogee medicine man Hotgun. These stories are written in the Creek language.

The Fus Fixico letters talk about Muscogee Nation, Indian Territory and United States politics. This was a time of big political change. The Curtis Act of 1898 destroyed tribes, paving the way for Indian Territory to become the state of Oklahoma. Experienced politicians from the Five Civilized Tribes attempted to create an indigenous-controlled State of Sequoyah, but their proposals were rejected by the US Federal Government.

Posey served as secretary for the 1905 State of Sequoyah convention. His Fus Fixico letters poked fun of the statehood debate. Various U.S. newspapers proposed printing the Fus Fixico letters nationwide, but Posey refused. His readers were in Indian Territory, and he didn’t believe a non-Native audience would understand the humor.

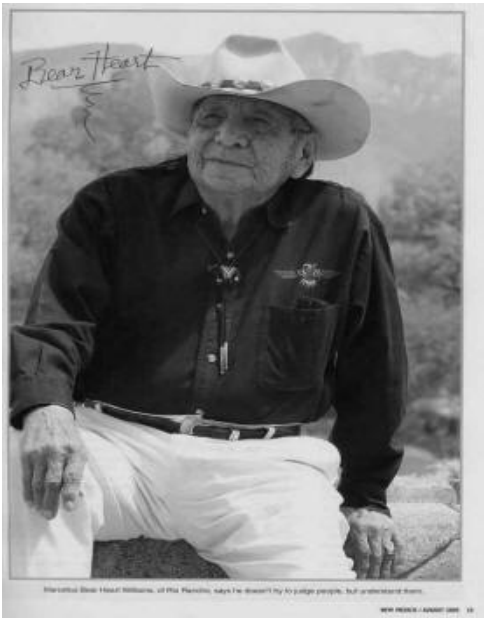
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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Posey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Posey)





## MARCELLUS “Bear Heart” WILLIAMS (1918-2008)



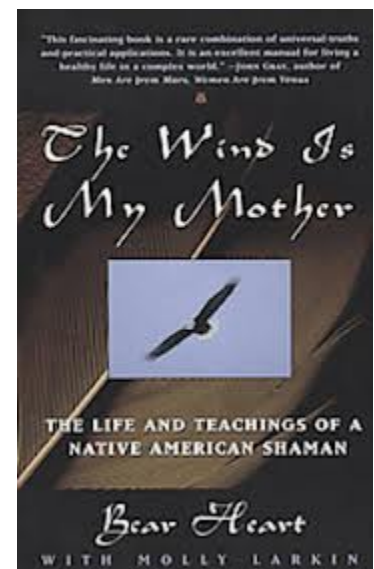
Marcellus “Bear Heart” Williams was born in Okemah, Oklahoma into the Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribe. He was the author of the *The Wind Is My Mother*, which is now published in 14 languages. One of the last traditionally trained “medicine persons”, Bear Heart, who speaks in 13 native languages, was also an American Baptist Minister and holds an honorary PhD in humanities. He served for 7 years as a member of the advisory board for the Institute of Public Health-Native American and Alaskan Natives at Johns Hopkin’s School of Medicine.

Significant to Bear Heart are the lives he has touched. He prayed with the firefighters at Ground Zero in New York City in November 2001, gave advice to rescue workers and their families after the Oklahoma City tragedy and once met with President Truman.

“I went into the Oval Office and we talked,” Bear Heart says of his visit with Truman. “I noticed all the papers on his desk. I realized that when he signs those papers it is not only for [him], but for all the people. I prayed to help him guide the country and work out solutions for the country as a whole. If we can stand together spiritually, we can do many wonderful things to solidify that old American spirit in which this nation was born”.

“Traditionally the chief was the poorest man in the tribe. If he went on a hunt and brought back a lot of game, he gave it to widows who could not hunt for themselves. He was there to serve the people and he did it without resentment, with a sense of duty. When people lined up to eat, the chief stayed in the back and let others eat first. You don’t see that today...”

Perhaps the quality that makes Bear Heart especially appealing in this modern world is that he is so inclusive. He doesn’t judge but tries to understand. He calls people from all ethnic backgrounds and walks of life his uncles and aunts and children and grandchildren. They are folks to whom he has no traditional relation, but they have become family. To Bear Heart we are all one family, and it’s not just what he says but how he lives.



## JEAN CHAUDHURI (1937-1997)

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Biography taken from the Muscogee Nation News, April 2013, Sterling Cosper - MNN reporter

Ella Jean Hill-Chaudhuri or Hiyvtke (early dawn in Muscogee), a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Bear Clan, was born in 1937 and grew up in Okemah, Oklahoma. Jean Chaudhuri learned Muscogee (Creek) values from James Scott, her grandfather, who walked the Trail of Tears as a young boy. He was the only member of his family to survive the journey to new Indian Territory. "She grew up knowing the ceremonial grounds lifestyle and those old stories from James Scott", said her son Jon Chaudhuri. Other members of her family attended church, which she also found interesting.



Jean fought alongside her parents for the Indians right to elect their own officials among their people, instead of the U.S. Government choosing for them. She moved to Arizona in 1972 where she became the Executive Director of the Tucson Indian Center and Director of the Traditional Indian Alliance. The Center assisted in service programs for Native Americans in the Tucson area. She was also the founder of the first off-reservation Indian Health clinic in Tucson.

As founder and President of the Arizona Indian Women in Progress (IWP), Jean built a network of Indian women on and off the reservation that influenced issues of Native American cultural survival in education and the arts. During the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Christopher Columbus, she wrote and produced a musical, "*Indians Discover Christopher Columbus*," a comedy about his misadventures and the welcoming spirit of the American Indian. Jean was a traditional Indian storyteller and spoke at many public meetings on the importance of Native American cultural heritage and the traditions of tribal peoples.

In 1986 she founded and co-chaired the Native American Heritage Preservation Coalition. She worked to educate community and governmental leaders about the importance of honoring the legacy of the Phoenix Indian School, where Indian children learned to read, write and adapt into American culture for 100+ years. In 1992, she and her group worked especially hard to prevent the construction of commercial buildings and high rise condos on the Indian School land. Through her leadership and the work of many others, a part of the Indian School land was preserved for public use.

Jean co-authored *A Sacred Path: the Way of the Muscogee Creeks* with her husband, Joy Chaudhuri. For her work in Tucson, in 1977 she received the American Institute of Public Service's Jefferson Medal at a ceremony in the U.S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C.

Jean died in 1997 at the age of 59. In 2000, after her death, she was given the Outstanding Native American Leader Award and in 2003, the Dr. Martin Luther King Living The Dream Award.

### *A Sacred Path* *The Way of the Muscogee Creeks*



*John Chubbett and Joseph Chubbett*

UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2001 - History - 191 pages

A Sacred Path is about Muscogee Creek values and views, including concepts of nature, men and women, religion and history. Written from a traditional full-blood Muscogee citizen's view and with the teachings of many traditional elders and leaders, the book is a valuable addition to the current body of literature on the tribe.

## CYNTHIA LEITCH SMITH (1967 - )

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Cynthia Leitich Smith is the bestselling author of several books for young readers, including *Jingle Dancer*, *Indian Shoes*, *Rain Is Not My Indian Name*, the Tantalize series and the Feral series.

She grew up an only child in the Kansas City area and regularly visited her family in Oklahoma. She is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Indian Nation through her great-grandfather's family. He was in the U.S. Air Force and passed away the year she was born, but Cynthia came to know him through stories.



Storytelling has always been important to Native Americans and the stories about her grandfather were important to Smith. Those stories led to reading, which in turn led to writing. Cynthia began writing poetry in elementary school. She entered many school competitions but never won or placed. She didn't give up. In the sixth grade, she had a column, Dear Gabby, where she offered advice and encouragement to her classmates.

Cynthia went on to become editor of her junior high and high school newspapers. She majored in journalism (news/editorial and public relations) at the University of Kansas and earned a law degree at The University of Michigan Law School, where she co-founded The Michigan Journal of Gender and Law. She served as president of the Native American Law Students Association.

While in college, Cynthia completed internships at small-town newspapers such as The Dallas Morning News, The Detroit Legal News, and big companies like Hallmark Cards in Kansas City. Her initial career goal was to become a newspaper reporter, a professor at journalism school or law school. However, after the Oklahoma City Bombing, she resigned from the Office of Health and Human Services in Chicago to write full-time for kids and teens.

She explains, "I enjoyed journalism and the law, but, reflecting on my life, neither meant as much to me as uplifting young readers. It's risky to be a fiction writer and it doesn't pay nearly as well as law or as reliably as journalism. But there is no better, more valuable audience. I have so much respect for my readers and their potential in the world."

### Cynthia Leitich Smith, selected bibliography:

- *Jingle Dancer* (2000), ages 4+.

Awards: Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies, on the 2002 Texas 2x2 list, and on the 2002 Michigan Reader's Choice Award List.

- *Rain is Not My Indian Name* (2001), middle school readers.

Garnered Smith recognition for 2001 Writer of the Year by Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers.

- *Indian Shoes* (2003), ages 7 and up.

Selected for inclusion on the NEA Native American Book List. Listed as a Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies, the 2003 Best Children's Books of the Year by Bank Street college of Education, and Choices 2003 by the Cooperative Children's Book Center.

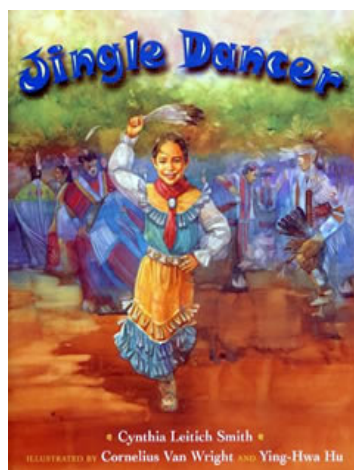
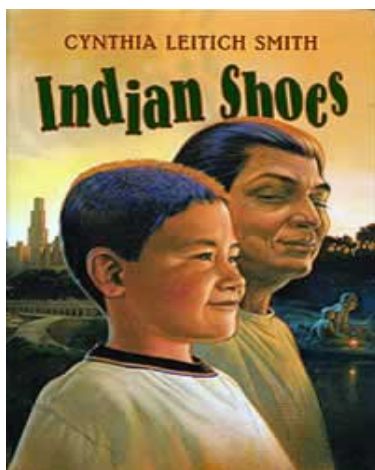
- *Santa Knows* (2006), ages 4 and up.

In 2006, it was included among "Holiday High Notes" by the Horn Book, "Worthy Stories for the Holidays" by the Miami Herald, and cheered as a "newly minted winner" by Kirkus Reviews.

- *Holler Loudly*, ages 4 and up.

Featured at the 2010 Texas Book Festival and a Dolly Parton's Imagination Library selection.

- *Blessed*, ages 14 and up.
- *Tantalize: Kieren's Story*, ages 14 and up.
- *Diabolical* (2011), ages 14 and up.
- *Feral Nights* (2013)
- *Eternal: Zachary's Story* (2013)



Written by C.L. Smith and edited for use in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation 2015 Challenge Bowl Study Guide,  
<http://www.answers.com/topic/cynthis-leitich-smith-children-s-author>



**JENNIFER ELISE FOERSTER (1979 - )**

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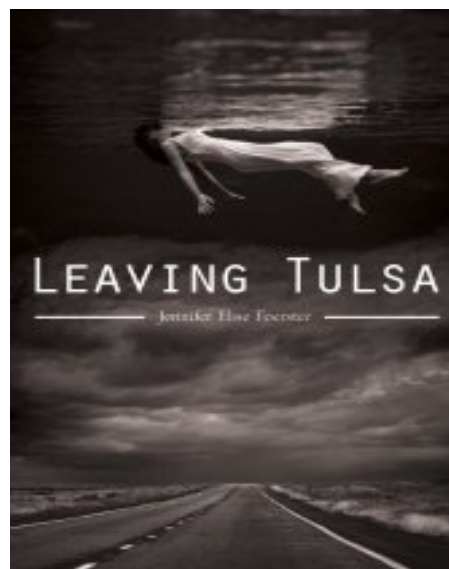
Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen Jennifer Elise Foerster was on the shortlist for one of the world's most prestigious prizes in literature. She was a contender in the PEN Literary Awards' \$5,000 Open Book prize for her poetry anthology *Leaving Tulsa* (University of Arizona Press, 2013), given "for an exceptional book-length work of literature by an author of color published in 2013," according to the description from the PEN American Center.

Besides her Muscogee (Creek) heritage, Foerster is of Dutch and German descent. Jennifer grew up attending international schools in Europe—her father was a diplomat for the U.S. Air Force—and spending summers in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with her grandmother. The dual upbringing is reflected by and enhances her work, reviewers noted.

"Leaving Tulsa scorches the boundaries of time, place, and self as the speaker both explores and challenges her Muscogee and European heritage within a contested America," wrote the Missouri Review.

Jennifer Elise Foerster received her MFA in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts (July 2007) and her BFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico (2003). She has received fellowships to attend Soul Mountain Retreat, the Naropa Summer Writing Program, the Idyllwild Summer Poetry Program, Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, and the Vermont Studio Center. From 2008-2010, Jennifer was a Wallace Stegner Fellow in Poetry at Stanford University. Jennifer now lives in San Francisco.

Jennifer's poems have been anthologized in *Sing* (University of Arizona Press 2013), *New California Writing 2011* (Heyday Press 2011), and *Turtle Island to Abya Yala* (Malinalli Press 2011).





# Muscogee Authors & Artisans

## Section 2 - Artists

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## ***JOAN HILL (1930 - )***

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Joan Hill, also known as Che-se-quah, is a Muscogee Creek-Cherokee artist. She is one of the most awarded women artists in the Native American art world.

Joan Hill was born in Muskogee, Oklahoma in 1930. Hill is descendant of Muscogee Creek and Cherokee chiefs. She was named Che-se-quah, Muscogee for “Redbird”, after her great-grandfather, Redbird Harris and her mother’s grandfather.

Hill attended Bacone College. In 1952, she received her BA degree in Education from Northeastern State University of Tahlequah, Oklahoma. In 1953, Hill took the Famous Artists Course. She was a public art teacher for four years before becoming a full-time artist.

She has received more than 290 awards from countries including Great Britain and Italy. Other honors include over 20 Grand Awards, and the Waite Phillips Artist Trophy. In addition, Hill was the winner of a prestigious mural competition at the Daybreak Star Performing Arts Center from the Seattle Arts Commission in Washington. In 1974, Hill was given the title “Master Artist” by the Five Civilized Tribes Museum in Muskogee.

Over 110 of her works are in permanent collections, including the Sequoyah National Research Center in Little Rock, Arkansas, the United States Department of the Interior Museums of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Washington, D.C. and the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, New York City. In 2000, Hill was the “Honored One” of the Red Earth Festival in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Hill is known most for her acrylic paintings which use colors of neutrals, oranges, reds and purples. She also works in watercolors, especially when painting landscapes and nature. “Each element of her paintings is purposeful”, writes author Susan C. Power. She mainly paints Creek and Cherokee women and frequently paints the nude figure. Hill also explores non-objective abstraction.

Hill said in 1991, “Art widens the scope of the inner and outer senses and enriches life by giving us a greater awareness of the world”.



*Watercolor*

## ***JEROME TIGER (1941-1967)***

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Jerome Richard Tiger was a Native American painter from Oklahoma. Tiger produced hundreds of paintings from 1962 until his death in 1967.

A full blood Muscogee Creek-Seminole, Tiger's style is said to combine "spiritual vision, human understanding and technical virtuosity" but with traditional subject matter and composition. His paintings first gained recognition at the Philbrook Museum of Art.

Born in Tahlequah, Oklahoma on July 8, 1941, Tiger attended public schools in Eufaula and Muskogee, Oklahoma. English was not his first language. Dropping out of high school at the age of 16, Tiger joined the United States Navy and served in the Naval Reserve from 1958 to 1960.

In 1962, a friend encouraged Tiger to submit his paintings to the American Indian Artists Annual at the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He began to produce a number of paintings over the next several years, winning numerous awards. In 1965, the Philbrook Museum of Art displayed a solo exhibit of Tiger's art. During this time, he lived in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Tiger was compared to Rebrandt and Francisco Goya because of his ability to draw an object or person after a short glance. He worked in oil, watercolor, tempera, casein, pencil and pen and ink.

Tiger died from a handgun accident on August 13, 1967, at the age of 26. His art can be found at the Philbrook and Gilcrease Museums in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the OSU Museum of Art in Stillwater, Oklahoma, the Five Civilized Tribes Museum in Muskogee, Oklahoma, the Woolaroc Museum near Bartlesville, Oklahoma, the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the Museum of the American Indian and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Jerome's brother Johnny Tiger, Jr. and daughter Dana Tiger, are successful artists. Jerome's other daughter, Lisa Tiger, is a prominent AIDS educator and activist as well as a motivational speaker.



*Stomp Dance, 1967, Oklahoma Historical Center*

## ***DANA TIGER (1962 - )***

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Dana Tiger is an award winning, nationally acclaimed artist. She is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and is of Creek/Seminole/Cherokee descent. Dana was just five years old when her father, legendary artist Jerome Tiger, passed away. She turned to his art as a way to know him and with the teachings of her uncle, famed painter Johnny Tiger Jr., Dana was exposed to the richness of her Native American culture and her family's name.

Best known for her watercolors and acrylic paintings depicting the strength of Native American women, Dana's paintings now hang in galleries, universities, Native American institutions and state buildings nationwide. She has won numerous awards and art competitions including the Five Tribes Masters Art Show, the Cherokee National Holiday Art Competition and the Creek Nation Artist of the Year Award. In recognition of her accomplishments as an artist as well as an activist and community leader, Dana was inducted into the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame in 2001.

Dana and her husband, Donnie Blair, run the Tiger Art Gallery in Muskogee, Oklahoma, and have two children, Christie and Lisan, also gifted artists. In 2002, Dana founded the non-profit Legacy Cultural Learning Community, dedicated to nurturing Native youth via the celebration and sharing of tribal languages and culture through the arts.



**DAN BROOK**

Muscogee-Creek Native American artist Dan Brook was born to ranch life in the Creek nation of Oklahoma. Memories of his father, a second-generation rancher and Indian cowboy, and his vivid tales of turn of the century ranch life are preserved in Brook's mind. The fellow native playmates of his childhood, the cowboys and neighboring farmers, themselves descendants of early pioneers of Indian-territory, have provided a rich tapestry of images, culture and history for the artist to draw upon. His gift was evident from early childhood. "My earliest memories are of drawing. I suppose that is true of most children, I just never stopped."

The isolation of rural ranch life provided long hours of sketching, which continues to this day, in sessions in his studio. In the fourth grade, he entered a youth art show. The judges refused to believe that he had not traced the pen and ink drawing. "My first experience with the back-handed compliment", he says with a laugh.

The artist attended Baylor University on a football scholarship, playing under legendary coach Grant Teaff. Upon graduation, Brook studied art in the old-world tradition of apprenticeship, with renowned portrait sculptor, Dr. B.N. Walker, called by some a modern-day Houdon. It was then that the artist's God-given talents were combined with the techniques of the old masters. "There is an inner power in Dan's portraiture work, like that of the Roman artists who captured senators likenesses in marble", says fellow artist David Spence. It seems only fitting that one of Brook's early commissions was a portrait of the Creek nations' great chief, Claude A. Cox (dec.), now placed in the tribal capitol. He has since done several busts of famous Native leaders.

Twenty five years later, Brook continues his exploration of sculpture, recently completing the Trail of Tears monument in Tulsa, Oklahoma. This contemporary monument is the soaring work of a virtuoso. One of the few sculptors that create in both figurative and contemporary styles, the artist is a master in bronze, terra cotta and lucite. His work has been collected in public and private sectors in the United States. His reputation has now crossed the ocean, as he has been commissioned to create works in the Middle East and Europe. "Like the ancient Creek artists, Brook prays for the "Master of Breath" to guide his hands as he begins each new piece". The artist happily lives and works in Dallas, Texas.

Dan Brook has successfully completed 18 large scale relief sculptures for Texas Christian University's new football stadium. The artwork honors the donors who made the 164 million dollar project a reality. The university acquired the collection for an undisclosed sum.

**PUBLIC COMMISSIONS**

- Trail of Tears Monument - Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Freedom Center Fountain - Kurdistan of Northern Iraq
- Agape Children's Home - Romania
- Allie Reynolds Commemorative Bust - Red Earth Museum
- Ten Large Reliefs, Muscogee-Creek Nation - Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Five Large Reliefs, Friends for Life Charity Headquarters - Waco, Texas
- Chief Leapford Bearskin Commemorative Bust, Wyandotte Tribal Nation - Wyandotte, Oklahoma



- Samuel Checotah Commemorative Bust - Checotah, Oklahoma
- Chief Claude Cox Commemorative Bust, Muscogee-Creek Tribal Capital - Okmulgee, Oklahoma
- Commemorative Bust, Counsel House Museum - Okmulgee, Oklahoma
- Woody Guthrie Monument - Okemah, Oklahoma
- Commemorative Bust, Okfuskee County Historical Society - Okemah, Oklahoma



**Trail of Tears Monument** marking the ending point of the Creek Nation's trail of tears journey,  
Commissioned by the Creek Nation and funded by the taxpayers of Oklahoma.



**Chief Samuel Checote, Chief of the Creek Nation**  
Commissioned by the city of Checotah, Oklahoma.



***SANDY FIFE WILSON (1950 - )***

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I was introduced to art at a young age. My mother, Carmen Griffin Fife, was an artist and teacher. She attended the Indian Art Teachers program on the same campus I attended high school in Santa Fe, New Mexico. My grandfather carved in wood and stone. I never knew him, but his canes are still used by our deacons at Thewarle Indian Baptist Church. My father, James Fife, could draw and always made sure we had pencils, paper, and colors to work with. He also worked with metals. Mama showed me how to get clay from the pasture and prepare it for pottery making, how to fingerweave and how to paint in various media. I also learned sewing and needlework skills from her.



I attended high school at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. While there I took painting, printmaking, jewelry, and Traditional Techniques. My instructors were Neil Parsons, Fritz Scholder, Seymour Tubis, Holbrook and Josephine Wapp, all world known artists. I learned so much there about Native American culture and art. Several other students and I were chosen to demonstrate our art at the Wichita Art Museum, Wichita, Kansas. I demonstrated fingerweaving. We traveled with Allan Houser, stopping along the way to see some of his early work. Later, while teaching there, I learned to cast bronze sculptures from Allan Houser. After graduating in 1969, I was chosen along with several other alumni to exhibit and demonstrate art at Woodstock, Art and Music Festival in upstate New York. I earned my degree from NSU in art and education and taught art at Dewey Public School for two years.

When Mrs. Wapp retired from IAIA, I was asked to take her teaching position as Traditional Techniques instructor. I taught weaving, leather work, beadwork, and other traditional techniques and fashions. With our strong family ties and aging parents, we moved back to Oklahoma when we were offered teaching jobs at Chilocco Indian School. When Chilocco closed I started teaching art at Morris, OK.

My parents stressed the importance of education. I never thought of not going to college. Since retirement, I have continued my education at the College of the Muscogee Nation. I have completed classes in Shell Carving, Creek Pottery, Flute Making and Mvskoke Hymns I and II. I have also learned to make the traditional Creek cane baskets and how to split and trim river cane. I am so blessed that my fingers can move and my eyes can see, so that I am able to enjoy the making of art. While teaching art, I stressed the importance of appreciating art and enjoying doing some type of art, as a hobby or career.



Sandy Fife Wilson's twined bags with fingerwoven straps, carved shell necklaces and Creek basket.

# Muscogee Authors & Artisans

## Section 3 – Musicians & Actors

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***WILL SAMPSON (1933-1987)***

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Will Sampson was an American actor and artist. Sampson, a Native American Muscogee (Creek), was born in Okmulgee, Oklahoma and was an imposing 6'5" tall. He was given the name Kvs-Kvna, meaning left-handed. He was known to his family as Sonny Sampson. He began painting as a child and then met large success in the art world as an adult. His paintings and sketches of Western and traditional Native themes are distributed across the United States in the Smithsonian Institute, the Denver Art Gallery, the Gilcrease Institute, the Philbrook Art Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Creek Council House in Okmulgee, Oklahoma and in private collections.

"First of all, before he was ever anything else, he was an artist. It was his first love", stated Sampson's sister, Norma Sampson-Bible.

She said her brother became an actor by happenstance. "What he told me, he was up there in Yakima, Washington, somewhere up there in the mountains painting and drawing and coming down once in a while. He said he had a friend in town. He came down, to check his mail or something and his friend told him that they were in town casting for a movie and said they needed 'a tall, ugly Indian'. Those were his words...so my brother thought, 'Why not?' He was always one to take a gamble anyway. So he walked to this casting office...they said the minute he walked in the door they had found their Indian. So he was the mute Indian in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*."

"*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*", based on the novel by Ken Kesey, was made in 1975 after most producers had rejected its commercially unattractive plot of a mental inmate literally taking over his asylum. The film won five Academy Awards, including two for its stars, Jack Nicholson and Louise Fletcher, and critical praise for Sampson's portrayal of Chief Bromden. In the film's climax, he provides a disturbing, ultimate gesture of defiance. After his friend Randel P. McMurphy (Nicholson) undergoes a frontal lobotomy, Bromden smothers him with a pillow then dramatically pulls a giant wash basin from its concrete foundation, throws it through a barred window and escapes the asylum where he had spent years silently pushing a broom.

Sampson's other notable roles were as "Taylor the Medicine Man" in the horror film *Poltergeist II*. He had a recurring role on the TV series *Vega\$*, as Harlon Two Leaf and starred in the movies *Fish Hawk*, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, and *Orca*. Sampson is largely credited with becoming the first Native American Actor to break out of demeaning and stereotypical celluloid Indian roles. He was nominated for "Best Performance by a Foreign Actor" Genie award for *Fish Hawk* in 1980.

Sampson appeared in the production of *Black Elk Speaks* with the American Indian Theater Company in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where David Carradine and other Native American actors like Wes Studi and Randolph Mantooth starred in stage productions. In 1983, Sampson became a founding member of the American Indian Registry for the Performing Arts, which helped American Indian performers and technicians get work, and which pushed for cultural accuracy in scripts in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

After undergoing a heart and lung transplant at Houston Methodist Hospital in Houston, Texas, he died on June 3, 1987, of post-operative kidney failure and pre-operative malnutrition problems. Sampson was 53 years old. He was buried at Graves Creek Cemetery in Hitchita, Oklahoma.

His painting and sketches can be found in the book, *Beyond Cuckoo's Nest – The Art and Life of William Sampson, Jr.*

**Will Sampson, selected filmography:**

- West of the Imagination (TV series)
- Firewalker
- Poltergeist II: the Other Side
- Insignificance
- Mystic Warrior (TV mini-series)
- Yellow Rose (TV series)
- Born to the Wind (TV series)
- Alcatraz: The Whole Shocking Story (TV mini- series)



*Dangerous Crossing*

## JOY HARJO (1951 - )

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Joy Harjo was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma and is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. She has released five award-winning CD's of original music and won a Native American Music Award (NAMMY) for *Best Female Artist of the Year*. She performs nationally and internationally, solo and with her band, The Arrow Dynamics.

She has appeared on *HBO's Def Poetry Jam*, in venues in every major U.S. city and internationally. She performed *We Were There When Jazz Was Invented* at the Chan Centre at UBC in Vancouver, BC, and appeared at the *San Miguel Writer's Conference* in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Her one-woman show, *Wings of Night Sky, Wings of Morning Light*, premiered in Los Angeles in 2009, with recent performances at Joe's Pub in New York City, LaJolla Playhouse as part of the Native Voices at the Autry, and the University of British Columbia.

Her books of poetry include *How We Became Human-New and Selected Poems* and *She Had Some Horses*. Her awards include the *New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts*, the *Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers Circle of the Americas*, and the *William Carlos Williams Award from the Poetry Society of America*. She was recently awarded 2011 Artist of the Year from the *Mvskoke Women's Leadership Initiative*, and a *Rasmuson US Artists Fellowship*. She is a founding board member of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation.





## ***NELSON HARJO (1964 - )***

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Nelson Harjo was born in Weleetka, Oklahoma. In 1982, he married Georgia Burgess and together they have two sons, Nelson and Julian and on grandson, Jaice.

He is of the Muscogee (Creek) tribe and belongs to the Alabama Tribal Town. He is also a headman at a sweat lodge. Mr. Nelson currently serves as Chairman of the Citizenship Board for the Creek tribe and has taught at the College of the Muscogee Nation for several years.

Mr. Harjo specializes in making Native American flutes and has taught others how to make them for the past fifteen years. Harjo started playing the drums when he was 7 years old and picked up the guitar and the bass before the eighth grade. "My mother played every kind of instrument imaginable", he says. "Music was always a part of my life".

Although he had never had the chance to play one, Harjo was fascinated by the traditional flute, an almost mystical instrument that some Creeks believe is a gift from the Creator. In 1995, while Harjo was serving as a Methodist minister, he and his wife went to a missionary conference where a member of the Choctaw tribe offered a lesson on making Native American flutes.

Harjo finished his flute first then helped the rest of the class. "That first flute, man, it was awful", he says laughing. "It didn't make what I would call music, but it made some noise". It took five years of trial and error to perfect the process, however.

"Reality is", Harjo says, "that not every piece of bamboo can be made into a flute". His ancestors used Alabama river cane. But Oklahoma has more bamboo. Harjo lets the bamboo age into a yellowish brown, then cuts it into sections roughly 18 to 25 inches long. He smooth's out the hollow core with sandpaper.

His hands measure where to put six finger holes. An ordinary plumber's tool slowly, makes each hole bigger until it plays in tune.

Schools started asking him to give lessons. And at one high school, a Creek student wanted to hear a traditional medicine song, like other tribes have. "We don't have any songs" Harjo explained. "Not as far as anything that has been passed down. But if we are given songs now, they became our medicine songs. They become our tradition".

From beginning to end, it takes an hour to make a flute, less if Harjo isn't distracted by talking. Over the past 20 years, it adds up to more than 3,000 instruments he has made, each unique and handcrafted. His flutes can be found in Australia, Africa, Germany, England, Sweden and all across the United States.

A few years ago, the University of Oklahoma counted five people who could still make an authentic, traditional Creek flute. Two have since died.

# Veterans Affairs

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## VETERANS AFFAIRS

Funding for the Muscogee Veteran's Affairs department and construction of the special building was approved in early 2006 with firm support from Chief A.D. Ellis and, now director, Mr. Ken Davis (Marine Veteran). The construction of the building was completed in 2007 and the Veterans Affairs Administration moved in September 1, 2007.



Marine veterans in front of the pentagon-shaped Veterans Affairs building. The Marine veterans are donning vests made to fit by the Veterans Affairs. Each Muscogee veteran can receive a colored vest based on his service record.



The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Veterans vests are issued to citizens of the tribe who are retired from the military or left with an honorable discharge. Started in 2006, the Veterans Affairs office has issued more than 700 vests to date. These are the vest colors for each branch of the military;

- U.S. Coast Guard – White
- U.S. Navy – Gray
- U.S. Army – Green
- U.S. Air Force – Blue
- U.S. Marine Corps – Red

**VETERANS AFFAIRS SEAL**

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**The Words on the seal:** “MUSKOGEE SULETAWVLKE ESTOFIS EKVNV HOMVN SAPAKLEARES” meaning “Muscogee Soldiers- Always have been – Always will be.” The words represent our soldiers who have always been there to fight not only for America but for our Native people and our lands.

**The 10 stars:** Represent the different wars our veterans have fought in and continue to fight in today. Starting with the War of 1812, also known as the Red Stick war, Civil War, where many Creeks fought on both sides, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam War, Panama, Kuwait, these wars are some of the wars that our veterans can tell many stories about and the last two are Afghanistan and Iraq, where our soldiers are currently fighting.

**The Red Eagle and the Pentagon:** In the center of the seal there is a Red Eagle that symbolizes our Native people. Behind the red eagle there is a pentagon that represents the Veterans Affairs building, a monument of the Muscogee Veterans and the only pentagon shaped building west of the Mississippi River.

**The Crossed Weapons, the Cross and the Fire:** In honor of our ancestral warriors, there is the Crossed Weapons at the top center of the seal. To the left and right of the eagle is a Cross and Fire, the Cross represents the Native people who follow the Christian faith and the Fire represents the Native people who follow the traditional ways or the ceremonial way of life.

**\*\*\*Note\*\*\*** The four traditional war colors are blue, white, black and red (note the colors are on the top of the Veterans building). These colors represent the lifestyle of a warrior. They are as follows:

Blue: Back to the Creator

White: Peace

Black: Death

Red: War



## BRANCHES OF THE ARMED FORCES

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### United States Army

Birth Date: June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1775

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### United States Navy

Birth Date: October 13, 1775

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### United States Marine Corps

Birth Date: November 10, 1775

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### United States Coast Guard

Birth Date: August 4, 1790

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### United States Air Force

Birth Date: September 18, 1947

## ***MVSKOKE NATION HONOR GUARD***



In 1993, a group of Mvskoke veterans formed the “Este Cate Veterans” which developed into the Mvskoke Nation Honor Guard. The Honor Guard was formally established and recognized in 1995 and consists of veterans from all branches of the military. The Mvskoke Nation Honor Guard assembles to give military honors to our veterans who have passed on without receiving proper military respect and honors. Since being established, our Honor Guard has been uninterrupted in their ability to render honors. They proudly come together in representation and honor of our tribe, our veterans and Mvskoke people. The Mvskoke Nation Honor Guard is considered the premier Honor Guard in the state of Oklahoma.



Left to right: Commander Thomas Yahola  
and Vice Commander Lov Thomas



## VALOROUS AWARDS

Since WWI, Commanding Officers and fellow soldiers have recognized, recommended and awarded Muscogee Warriors for their heroic actions. Individual Muscogee soldiers have distinguished themselves on the battlefield, receiving decorations ranging from the Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal, with "V" for valor, to the Medal of Honor. Some decorated veterans were awarded during their lifetime, while others were awarded posthumously. Some of these decorated veterans are still living today. Muscogee bravery is evident by the following medals of heroism awarded to our veterans.



**Bronze Star With V (Valor)**



**U.S. Army Commendation Medal  
With V (Valor)**



**U.S. Navy Achievement Medal  
With V (Valor)**



**Congressional Medal Of Honor**



**Distinguished Service Cross**



**Silver Star**



**The Purple Heart** – The Purple Heart was established by General George Washington at Newburgh, New York, on August 7, 1782 during the Revolutionary War. It was re-established by the President of the United States per War Department General Orders. Muscogee warriors since WWI have consistently proven their valor at the front and their Purple Hearts are evidence of their courageous sacrifice. In the Center Court of the Veteran Building, as of January 1, 2014, there are 154 plaques of our tribes Purple Heart recipients since WWI, 58 of these were awarded posthumously. The freedom we have today is because of their sacrifices yesterday.

## VETERANS STATUES



***"Muscogee Soldiers Statue"***



***"Prisoners Of War Statue"***



***"Ernest Childers Statue"***



***"Muscogee Women Soldiers Statue"***



***"Fallen Soldiers Statue"***



## MEMORIAL COURTYARD

Housed within the center of the Veterans Affairs building is the Memorial Courtyard. Inside the courtyard there are the memorial plaques honoring Muscogee warriors Killed In Action from WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Also, there are plaques honoring Muscogee warriors who Died of Wounds In Action since WWII. In addition, there are plaques honoring Muscogee Purple Heart recipients since WWI.



Muscogee warriors Killed In Action in  
World War I & World War II



Muscogee warriors Killed In Action in Korea & Vietnam



Muscogee warriors Wounded In Action



Muscogee warriors who Died Of Wounds In Action

# Notable Muscogee Veterans

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***ERNEST CHILDERS (1918-2005)***

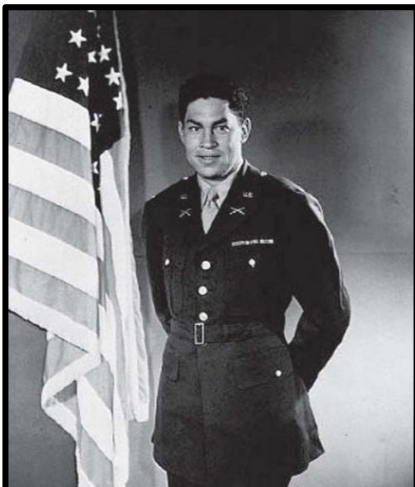
Ernest Childers passed away on Thursday, March 17 at the age of 87. Childers was the only member of the tribe to ever receive the Congressional Medal of Honor and only one of five Native Americans to be recognized with such distinction. Childers' heroic actions came as a young soldier in World War II. "Oklahoma has lost a genuine hero with the passing of Lt. Col. Ernest Childers," said Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry. "His life was and is a true inspiration."

Ernest Childers was born on February 1, 1918 in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. He grew up on a farm that was part of his father's original Creek allotment. Childers grew up in a Christian home, attending church at Springtown Indian Church about ten miles north of Coweta. In high school, he attended Chilocco Indian School.

Childers, as well as other Indian students, sought ways to better themselves financially and saw joining the Oklahoma National Guard as that opportunity. The Indian boys at Chilocco had their own group, Company C, or Charlie Company of the 45th Infantry division. 'The Fighting Thunderbirds' was the division's nickname. These Indian boys would become part of a unique fighting group. Upon the liberation of Sicily in WW II, General George S. Patton would pay them the ultimate honor. "Born at sea, baptized in blood, your fame will never die. You are one of the best, if not the best division in the history of American arms."

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty in action, Second Lieutenant Ernest Childers was awarded the Medal of Honor on April 8, 1944. The young Creek boy from Oklahoma would have his life changed forever. He was sent to Washington, D.C. to meet President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Childers described the Commander-in-Chief as pleasant and a very capable leader.

As the years passed, Childers would obtain the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He would train young recruits for future events such as the Korean and Vietnam Wars. In 1965, Ernest Childers would retire from the military. A remarkable career had come to an end. "The American Indian has only one country, and when you're picked on, the American Indian never turns his back," Childers proudly proclaimed.



Mr. Childers early in his career



Mr. Childers' awarded medals



A statute of Second Lieutenant Ernest Childers was dedicated by the Muscogee Nation to the City of Broken Arrow for their Veterans' Park

## MAMIE DIXON

*Excerpts from Tulsa World article: July 04, 2007*

Mamie Dixon has her own ideas about the Fourth of July. "Most people think of it as a firecrackers and picnic day," she said. Not that the 93-year-old World War II veteran minds the celebrating; she just wants everyone to remember the history behind it. "It's the day that we were free from the King of England," said Dixon, a Coweta resident. "We're lucky to have the way of life we have. I guess we are going to have to work harder to keep it."

Her first memory of the holiday was as a child in Sand Springs. "My mother took me and my sister and some friends to a park in Sand Springs," she said. Dixon doesn't recall any fireworks, but they rode carnival rides and visited a petting zoo. Dixon said it makes her sad when people dishonor the holiday or the flag. She thinks they just don't know any better.

Dixon did her part, serving in the U.S. Army from June 1943 through January 1946 at Fort Riley, Kan. "I was the first girl to leave Coweta for service," Dixon said. The daughter of Martin and Hepsey Kanard, Dixon made up her mind to serve her country and eventually earned her mom's blessing. "My father died when I was 4 and I just had mother," Dixon said. "She hated to see me go, but it was up to me."

"I got tired of hearing people tell me that I didn't have any brothers in the service. So that's one of the reasons why I went," she added.

Dixon, a Coweta resident since 1949, lived through the Great Depression. Times were better during the war, she said. People worked in factories as part of the war effort.

A member of what's been called "The Greatest Generation," Dixon credits life experience with building her generation's character. "They were different from the generations of today," Dixon said. "They were well disciplined and a lot of them know what being hungry was like." She also said there was no "dope" to interfere with things.



Dixon, a member of the Creek Nation tribe, attended an American Indian boarding school in Eufaula and says it prepared her for the military. The school superintendent was strict and would bring reserve officers to drill the students. "That's how I learned how to march," Dixon said.

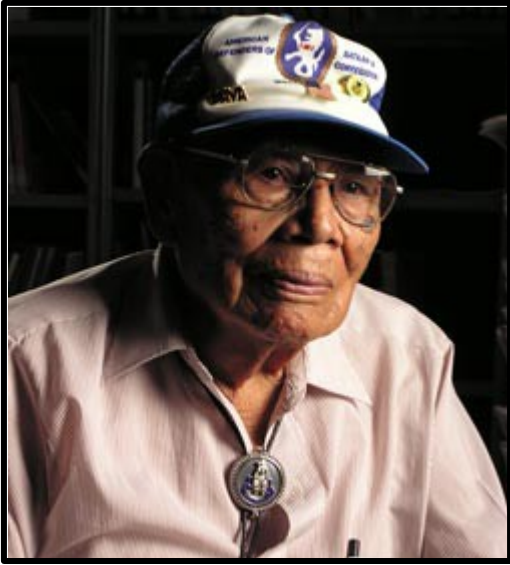
Whether 1943 or 2007, Dixon says she would gladly serve again. "If I was young enough, I might," Dixon said. "You read about freedom being expensive. Well, it is. It's expensive in life as well as money."





***PHILLIP COON (1919-2014)***

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Phillip W. Coon, a full-blooded Creek, was born on May 28, 1919, in Okemah, Oklahoma. He graduated from Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas on May 14, 1941. On September 19, 1941, he volunteered for overseas assignment with the U.S. Army and spent the following month traveling to his first duty station. Mr. Coon arrived in Manila on October 23, 1941 where he went through rigorous Basic Training and Jungle Warfare training. Upon completion of training, he was assigned to 4<sup>th</sup> Squad, H Company, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment as a machine gunner.

On April 11, 1942, Mr. Coon was captured by the Japanese Army and forced on the "Bataan Death March." He initially stayed at O'Donnell Prison Camp at Capas Tarlac for two months and went to Camp Cabantuan for nine months. In January 1943, he was transferred to Camp Lipa and then in September 1944 was transferred to Camp Murphy. His final journey as a POW was from September 1944 to

January 1945 when the Japanese began a movement to take him and his unit out of the Philippines to Tokyo, Japan.

Mr. Coon was discharged as a Corporal from Fort Sam Houston, TX on June 24, 1946. After being discharged he entered the Job Training Corps where he earned a two year apprenticeship in welding, painting, and decorating. He graduated in 1949 from the apprenticeship program and became a union worker.

Mr. Coon retired in 1981 from the local Painters and Decorators of America Union #1895. He is active in and is a life member of the national Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc. (Korea, Pacific, and Vietnam), the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, Inc., and the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Association. Mr. Coon is a member of the Oklahoma Haskell Alumni Association and a member of the Little Cussetah Baptist Church in Sapulpa. He attends the annual conventions of these organizations and has served as Secretary-Treasurer and Vice-Commander of the 31<sup>st</sup> Association.

Mr. Coon's awards and decorations include the American Defense Service Ribbon with one Bronze Star, an Asiatic Pacific Campaign Ribbon with two Bronze Stars, the Philippine Defense Ribbon, with one Bronze Star, and a Distinguished Unit Award with two Oak Leaf Clusters. In 1979, he received the Cross of Valor from Oklahoma Veterans Commission, which is the highest award that the State gave to its war veterans.

Mr. Coon passed away Monday, June 23, 2014. He was buried at Fort Gibson National Cemetery.



**OTHER NOTABLE VETERANS**

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Dick B. Breeding, WWI, US Army, received Distinguished Service Cross (posthumously) for killing enemy while searching for missing Army member during combat in France, May 1918.



Anna King, Korea, US Army, served as surgical nurse who landed with the invasion force at Inchon, South Korea to help and heal the wounded.



Jorene Coker (left) saw active duty at Pearl Harbor during WWII in the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services (WAVES).



Riley R. Bruner, Korea and Vietnam, US Army, was a Prisoner Of War in Korea and Wounded In Action at Korea and Vietnam.



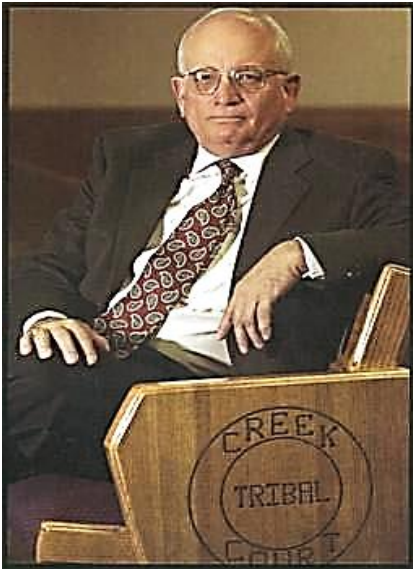
Vernon Wright, Korea, US Air Force, was shot down over North Korea and became a Prisoner Of War.



John Sloan, Vietnam, US Army is a recipient of 4 Purple Hearts.



## OTHER NOTABLE VETERANS



Patrick Moore saw active duty in the US Air Force from 1963 to 1967.



Bennie M. Gooden, US Marine Corps, was Wounded in Action and awarded the Silver Star.



Joe R. Taylor, US Marine Corps, was awarded the Bronze Star with V (for valor).



Stephanie M. Jefferson, US Army, was awarded the Combat Medical Badge. She is the first Muscogee woman to be awarded a signifier for actions in combat.

# Notable Muscogee Women

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## MARTHA BERRYHILL

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*Excerpts Taken from Tulsa World: Article Published: July 12, 2008*



Martha Berryhill was born more than a century ago on July 12, 1900. At 1 1/2 years old, Berryhill was one of 18,712 tribal citizens to be listed as a Creek Indian on the Dawes Commission Rolls.

Berryhill, who has a street named after her in Okmulgee, holds a special place in the hearts of many Creek citizens, and for good reason. As the last original allottee, she is the only remaining human connection to the tribe's pre-statehood and tribal membership roots.

The Creek Nation bases tribal membership on the 1906 Final Dawes Roll, and each current citizen is descended from at least one person on those rolls. Many people have numbers that are special to them, Berryhill's is 9671 — her roll number.

Martha Berryhill passed away Dec.18, 2010 in Okmulgee, OK.

**In 2010**, Brian Priegel, Mayor of the City of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, proclaimed July 12, 2010 as **MARTHA BERRYHILL DAY**.

### Muscogee (Creek) Nation Mourns the Passing of Last Original Allottee

**Excerpts taken from Muscogee (Creek) Nation website.**

OKMULGEE – Martha Berryhill, 110, entered into eternal rest on Saturday, December 18, 2010. She was born on July 12, 1900, in Okmulgee, Oklahoma (Indian Territory) to Reverend Harrison Logan Berryhill and Bettie Burgess Berryhill. She was a resident of Okmulgee all of her life.

Martha was the last remaining Original Allottee of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation listed on the Dawes Rolls. Martha is a strong believer in Christ and has the utmost faith in her Lord and Savior. She has always prayed daily out loud every day. She attended Newtown Methodist Church in rural Okmulgee.



**MARGARET MCKANE MAULDIN**

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Margaret Mauldin is best known for creating a 10,000 word dictionary of the Creek language that was published by the University of Nebraska. She also co-authored several children's books and recorded Creek hymns.

Her career has included the following:

- Instructor of the Creek language at the University of Oklahoma
- Instructor of Curriculum Development at the University of Oklahoma
- Adjunct Instructor of the Creek language at the University of Oklahoma
- Workshop Leader for the Oklahoma Native Languages Association

Her awards include the following:

- 2005 – LHD-Doctor of Humane Letters from the College of William and Mary
- 2011 – MCN Council honored Margaret Mauldin with a resolution for Language Revitalization
- 2011 – Citation of Merit awarded by the Native American Caucus at the University of Oklahoma

**Creek Language Instructor Remembered**

**Excerpts taken from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation website,**

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Margaret Mauldin, a Creek Language Instructor at the University of Oklahoma, passed away January 25, 2014. Mauldin worked to preserve the Mvskoke language through teaching, recording hymns and creating the Mvskoke to English dictionary “A Dictionary of Creek/Muskogee”.

Margaret Mauldin worked extensively with Jack Martin, Professor of Linguistics at the College of William and Mary, to translate and edit a collection of stories written by Creek citizens, Ernest Gouge and James Hill. Martin found the stories written by Ernest Gouge from 1915 and James Hill's stories were written in the 1930's.

After Margaret became ill, she continued to teach, often by video conferencing when she was unable to be there in person. She worked to her last day, preserving the Muscogee Creek language.

## ***SELINA JAYNE-DORNAN***

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Selina was raised in Eufaula, OK and graduated in 1975. She received an Associate of Speech and Drama at Eastern Oklahoma State College and continued her education at Oklahoma State University in Speech & Theatre Education.

Selina moved to Los Angeles, CA to pursue a career in the film industry. She studied film makeup artistry at the Joe Blasco School of Makeup, while seeking acting roles. Working behind the scenes was her bread and butter while waiting for her big break. Selina feels blessed that she had the opportunity to act in several films, from small to major roles. She thrived in the makeup field winning an award for her work on “Mulholland Drive”. She soon turned to producing and running a production company.



Selina returned to Oklahoma in 2003 and she opened her own business in Eufaula, a Merle Norman Cosmetic Studio. After getting the business established and hiring a manager she went to work for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in the Executive Director’s Office as an Executive Secretary.

In 2007 she won the McIntosh District MCN National Council Representative seat as the first woman representative for that district and held that seat for four years.

In 2011 Selina became the first female Mayor for the City of Eufaula.

In 2014 Selina ran for the Democratic Seat for the Oklahoma State Senate. Although she did not win, she felt it was a tremendously exciting and tiring experience, “The contacts and people I met were priceless”. Immediately after the Senate race, Selina was encouraged to run for the empty MCN Second Chief seat. “Since my term as mayor was coming to an end, I wanted to return to working with Nation and took that opportunity to do so”. “I enjoyed once again being able to get out to all the MCN communities and meeting with the citizens”. Although she didn’t win, she said “my motto is – at least I tried!”

Today, Selina is happy to be working for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation as the Public Relations Manager.

Selina is the daughter of the late Janetta Walker and is married to Jim Dornan, a letter carrier. They live in Eufaula with two faithful furry companions: Meko and Sugar. Selina has two step-children, two grandsons and one granddaughter. Selina is from the Raccoon Clan and her tribal town is Eufaula/Canadian.

**PEGGY BERRYHILL**

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Peggy Berryhill is a producer of public radio about contemporary Native America for national audiences. Peggy has been providing a Native voice to public broadcasting and support for Native radio for over 38 years. She is known as the “First Lady of Native Radio”.



Ms. Berryhill began her career in broadcasting in 1973. She is the only Native person to work as a full-time producer at National Public Radio (NPR) in the Specialized Audience Programs Department (1978-1979).

In 1997, Peggy Berryhill founded the Native Media Resource Center. The non-profit organization was formed to create content about Native Americans and to promote cross-cultural understanding. The Resource Center has worked in collaboration with the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Koahnic Broadcasting Corporation, Northern California Cultural Communication, Inc. and the Native American Public Telecommunication, Inc.

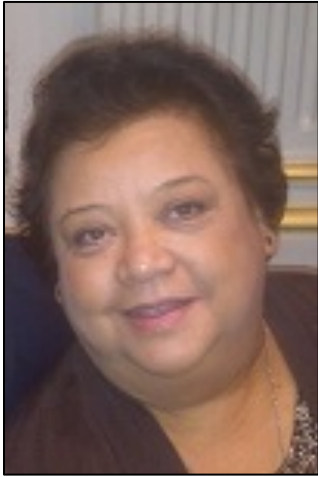
She was instrumental in forming the 2001 Native Radio Summit, where discussions were held forming a group to promote and facilitate American Indian radio programming content. This summit led to the creation of The Center for Native American Public Radio.

Ms. Berryhill has produced several radio programs including, “The California Indians Radio Project”, a 13-part series; “Club Red”, a comedy show; “The Red Road to Recovery”, a discussion by members of various tribes addressing the problem of alcohol addiction. She has hosted her own radio program, “Peggy’s Place”.

Ms. Berryhill serves on the board of the Native American Resource Center, the Native Media Resource center and the National Federation of Community Broadcasters. She has received numerous awards for her work, including the American Indian Local Heroes Award in 2005 and the Bader Award, a Native Radio Honor, in 2011.

**VIRGINIA THOMAS**

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Virginia has worked in the field of Indian Education for the past 43 years and has worked primarily in California, Alaska and Oklahoma. She is recognized throughout the Nation as an expert in the field of the Johnson-O'Malley Act and its mode of operation. She has been acknowledged by two Presidents for her service in the field of Indian Education and has provided hundreds of training workshops to both tribal leaders, school administrators, parents and students.

She is a keynote speaker with a flare of getting people motivated to make a difference within their communities. Her biggest joy is working directly with the students. Her students throughout the Nation are still in contact with her and many are following in her footsteps. It is not unusual to have former JOM students attend her workshops as a JOM Coordinator or Tribal Leader.

Virginia is most proud of founding the Muscogee Nation Challenge Bowl in 2000. Realizing there was a lack of teaching material in the schools regarding the Muscogee Nation, she formed a committee of MCN employees and community members and coordinated the first Challenge Bowl in 2000. She chaired the Committee up until 2011. Her desire was to instill a sense of cultural pride within the students, which it did, and radiated to the employees and volunteers who now assist in conducting the event. The Creek Language has always been a major portion of the Challenge Bowl and over the years the language is slowly returning with our youth.

She wrote the first Challenge Bowl guidelines, handbook and study questions then presented it before the MCN National Council seeking tribal funding of the event, which was approved. The Challenge Bowl began as an event by the Creek Nation JOM program and with the tribal funding it now belongs to the Nation. Her dream is that the Challenge Bowl will continue for generations to come and persist in making our youth proud of being Muscogee (Creek).

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Parents: Johnson and Lillian (Freeman) Thomas

Grandparents: Mack and Sarah Thomas, Theodore and Roseanna (Harjo) Freeman

Clan: Wotko: daughter of Fuswa

Education: B.A.; Elementary Teaching Certificate, Minor in Indian Studies-San Diego State University

Church: attends-Newtown Methodist, Tallahassee Methodist, Cedar Creek Baptist, Springtown Methodist, Christ United Methodist and others

Occupation: Thomas Consulting, Expertise in Johnson-O'Malley programs; Education Consultant for the National Resource Center 4 Tribes

**SERVICES TO THE MUSCOGEE NATION**

- 14 years as the Johnson-O'Malley manager (1999-2011)
- Founder of the Muscogee Nation Challenge Bowl (2000)
- Chair of the Muscogee Nation Challenge Bowl Committee (2000-2011)
- Muscogee Nation Scholarship Pageant Coordinator for 7 ½ years (2003-2011)
- Founder of the Muscogee Nation Revitalization Language Program
- Muscogee Nation Revitalization Language Program Manager
- Served on the Language Revitalization Committee for 8 years
- Served on the Okmulgee Community Board for 3 years

**SERVICES ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL**

- National Johnson-O'Malley Association (NJOMA) as a founding member
- Served as the NJOMA Board President for 16 years
- Served as the first NJOMA Executive Director
- Presently serves on the National Resource Center 4 Tribes Advisory Council for issue with Indian Child Welfare
- Presidential appointment to the National Advisory Council for Indian Education through the US Department of Education appointed by President George Bush (2004-2009)
- Presidential appointment to the National Advisory Council for Indian Education through the US Department of Education appointed by President Barak Obama (2009-present)
- Served on the National Indian Education Association Board
- Co-authored the re-write of the BIA/BIE National JOM handbook

**AWARDS**

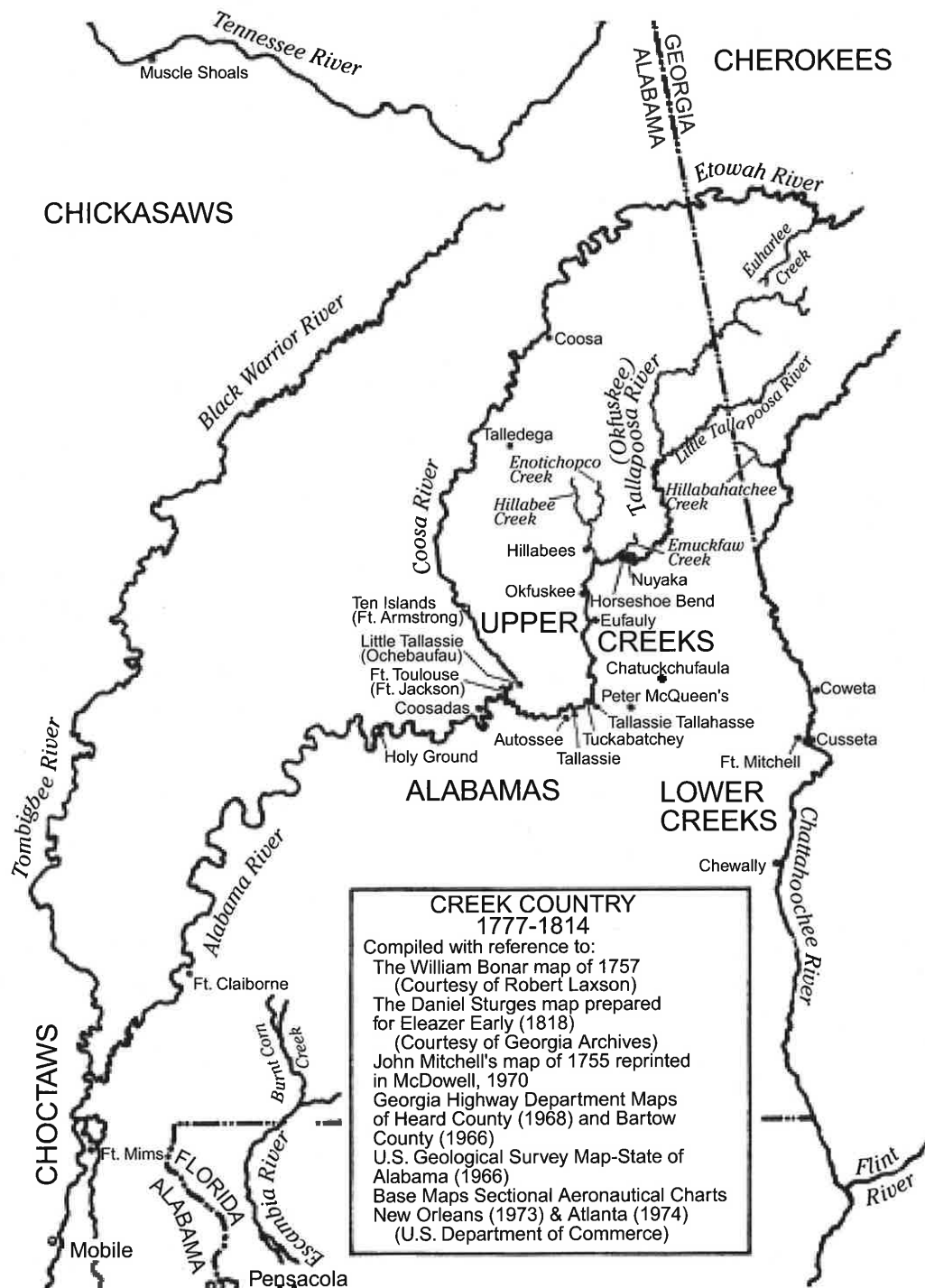
- Recipient of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fair Play Award for the Arctic Winter Games
- Gold Medal Holder for the World Eskimo Indian Olympics
- Recipient of the Federation of Indian Women Alice Timmons Award in Indian Education
- Recipient of the Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission Education Award



# Maps

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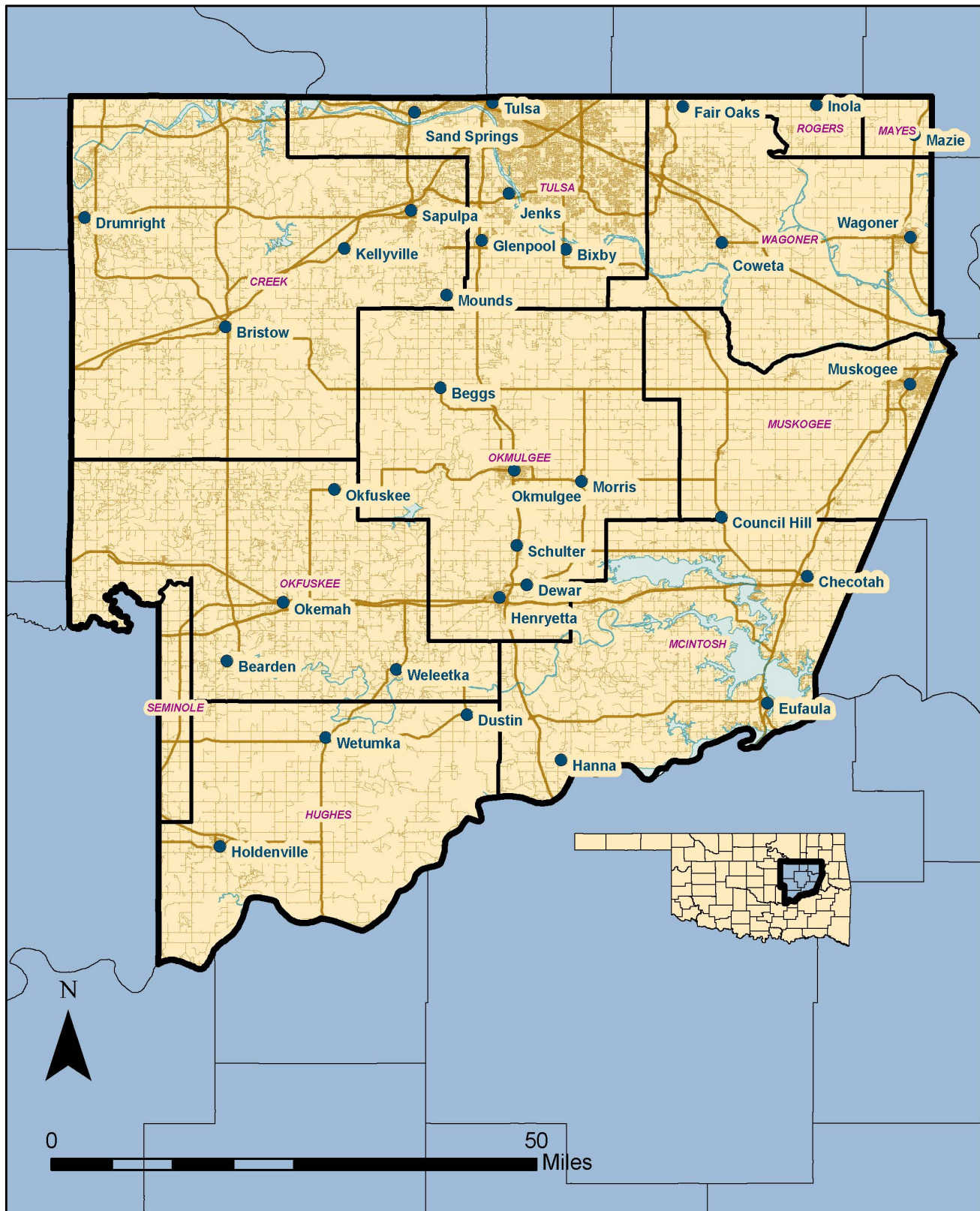
## ORIGINAL ALABAMA CREEK TERRITORY WITH TOWNS



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## EARLY OKLAHOMA CREEK TERRITORY WITH TOWNS



**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION JURISDICTION**

**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION**  
Jurisdiction Map



Geospatial Department  
Updated: 5/20/2013



**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM**

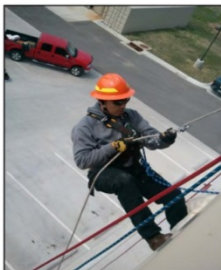
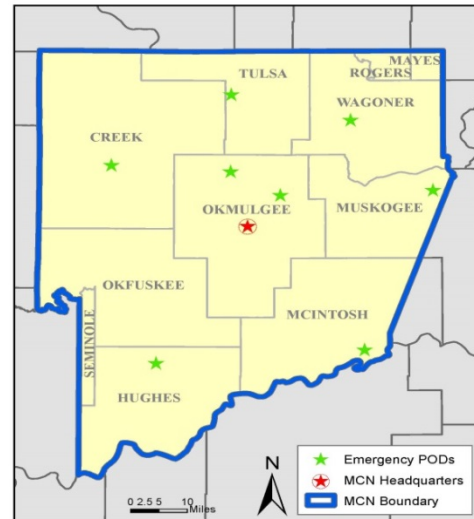
## Muscogee (Creek) Nation Emergency Response Team



The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Emergency Response Team is made up of Creek Nation employees who volunteer their time and are trained in:

- \* CPR/First Aid
- \* Incident Command
- \* Search and Rescue Operations
- \* Swiftwater Rescue
- \* Ropes Rescue
- \* CERT (Community Emergency Response Team)

These members train throughout the year and deploy during emergency situations within the Creek Nation.



### MCN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Emergency Management is to minimize the effects of attack, technological and natural disasters upon the people of Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Oklahoma by preparing, implementing and exercising preparedness plans, assisting local government subdivisions with training for and mitigation of disasters, and by coordinating actual disaster response/recovery operations.





**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION DIVISION OF HEALTH HOSPITAL AND CLINICS**

Creek Nation Community Hospital  
309 N 14th St  
Okemah, OK 74859  
918-623-1424

Eufaula Indian Health Center  
800 W Forrest Ave  
Eufaula, OK 74432  
918-689-2547

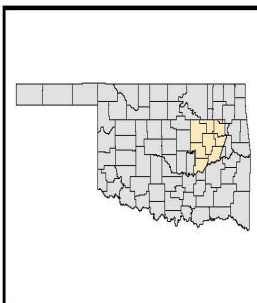
Koweta Indian Health Facility  
31870 E Highway 51  
Coweta, OK 74429  
918-279-3200

Okmulgee Indian Health Center  
1313 E 20th St  
Okmulgee, OK 74447  
918-758-1926

Sapulpa Indian Health Center  
1125 E Cleveland Ave  
Sapulpa, OK 74066  
918-224-9310

Wewoka Indian Health Center  
1/4 mile E of Intersection of SH270 & SH56  
Wewoka, OK 74884  
405-257-6282

Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Eleven County  
Tribal Jurisdictional Boundary



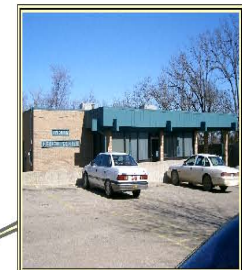
# Muscogee (Creek) Nation

## Division of Health

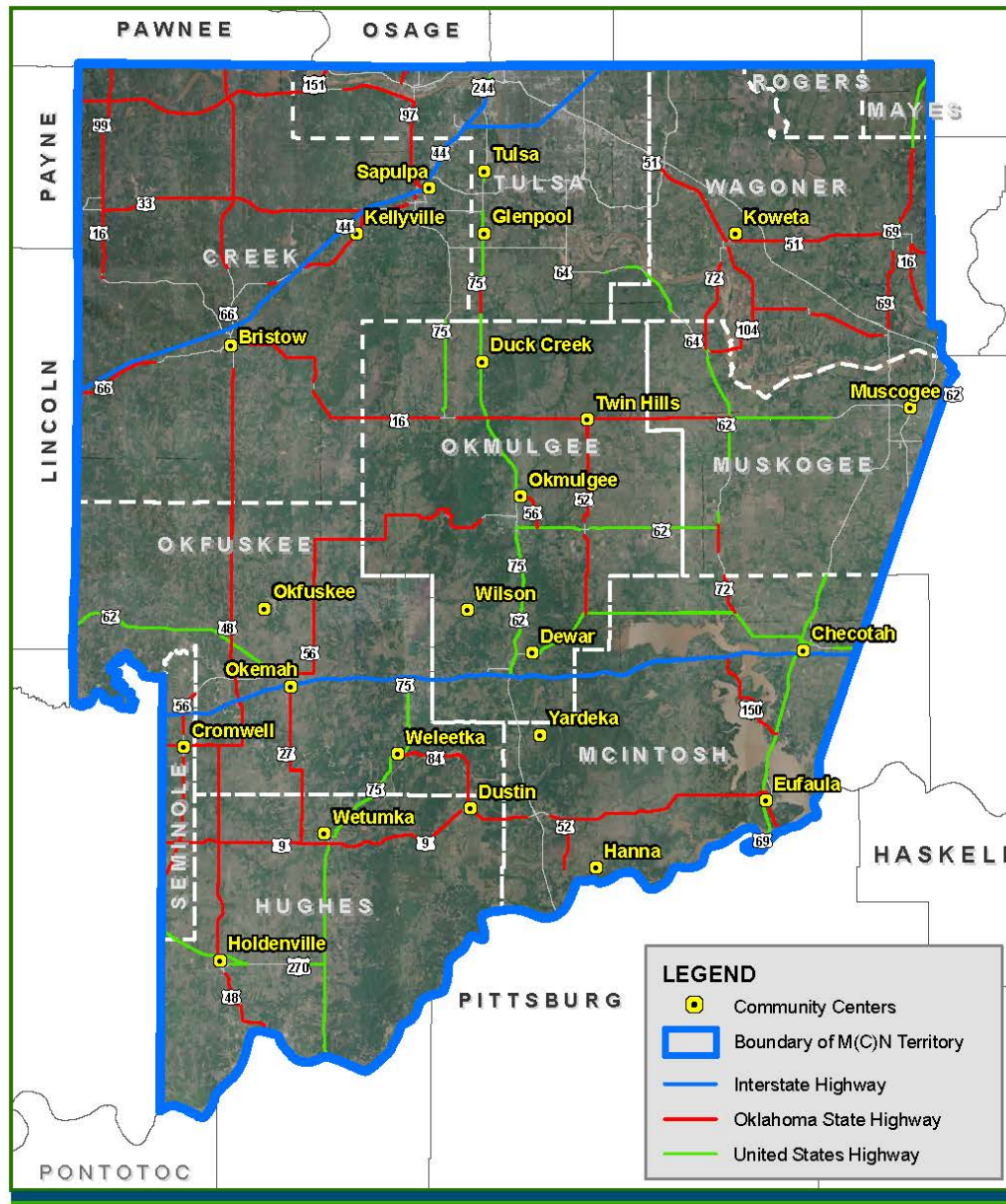
### Hospital and Clinics



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MCN Geospatial and Environmental Services Departments 09/09

**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION COMMUNITY CENTERS**

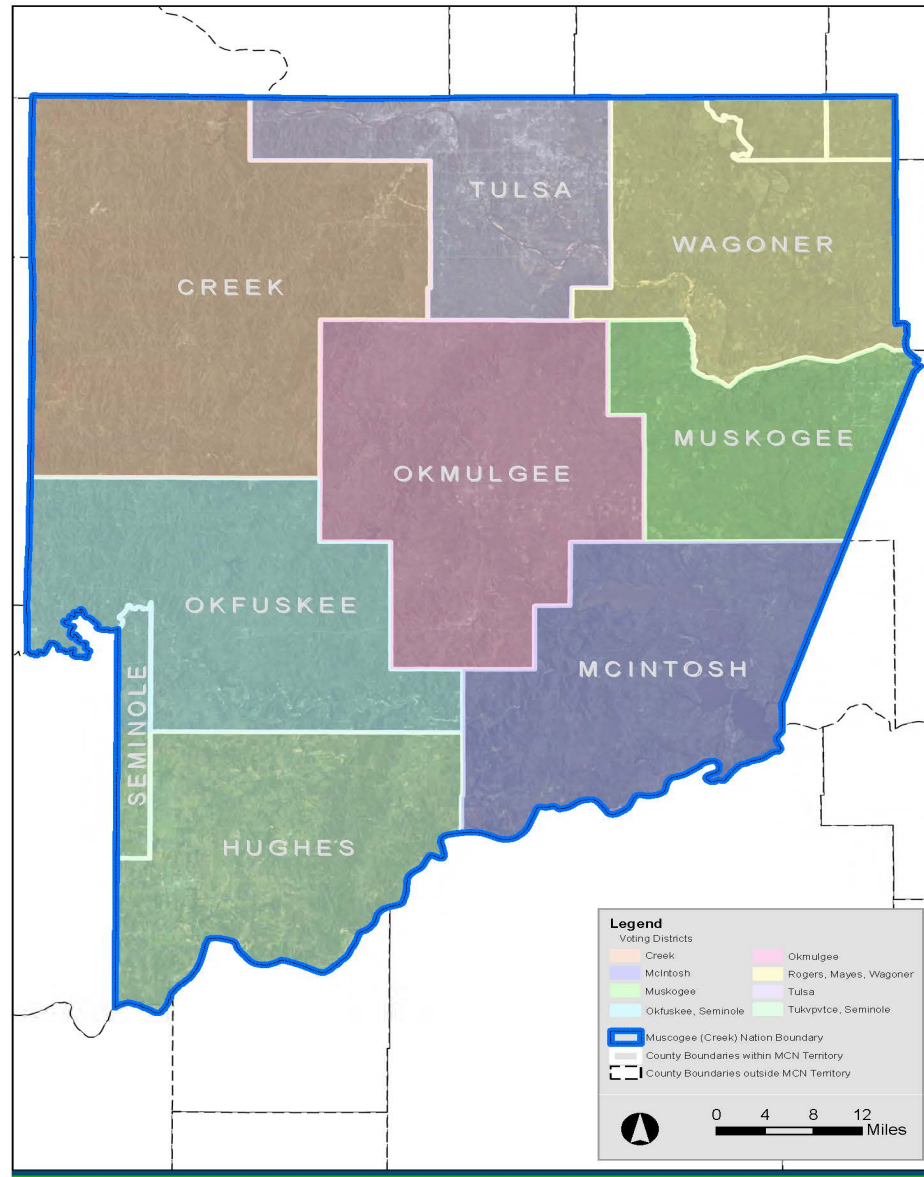
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**Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Community Centers**

Sources:  
Basemap: 2008 NAIP Orthophotography  
MCN Boundary: Digitized from USGS Topo  
County Boundaries: OU Center for Spatial Analysis, TIGER

**Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Geospatial Department**

M(C)N has 24 Chartered Communities within its territory. 22 have Community Centers. There is also a MCN Community in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (not shown).

**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION VOTING DISTRICTS**

Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Voting Districts

# Mvskoke Language

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<u>English</u>	<u>Mvskoke</u>	<u>Phonetics</u>
1. Chief	Mekko	(meek-go)
2. Summer	Meske	(miss-key)
3. Thank you	Mvto	(muh-doe)
4. Tall	Mahe	(maw-he)
5 Say it	Makvs	(maw-gus)
6. There	Mimv	(may-muh)
7. Monday	Mvnte	(mun-dee)
8. Road	Nene	(knee-knee)
9. Night	Nere	(knee-thee)
10. Day	Nettv	(knit-duh)
11. Neck	Nockwv	(nok-wah)
12. Side	Nvce	(nuh-gee)
13. Asleep	Noce	(no-gee)
14. Hickory nut	Oce	(oh-gee)
15. Inside	Ofv	(oh-fuh)
16. Like	Ome	(oh-me)
17. Owl	Opv	(oh-buh)
18. Rain	Oske	(oh-skee)
19. Four	Osten	(oh-sten)
20. Water	Owv	(oh-wuh)
21. Stomach	Nvrke	(nuth-key)
22. Tomorrow	Pakse	(bach-see)
23. Ten	Palen	(ball-in)
24. Turkey	Penwv	(ben-wah)
25. Boat	Perro	(bith-thlo)
26. Ball	Pokko	(bok-go)
27. Us	Pume	(bo-me)
28. Cat	Pose	(bo-see)
29. Grandpa	Pucv	(bow-jaw)
30. Pigeon	Pvce	(buh-gee)
31. Fast	Pvfne	(buff-knee)
32. Grass	Pvhe	(buh-he)
33. Grapes	Pvrko	(buth-go)
34. Mushroom	Pvto	(buh-doe)
35. Uncle	Pvwv	(bow-wah)
36. Corn	Vce	(uh-gee)



37. Tea	Vsse	(us-see)
38. Cow	Wakv	(wah-guh)
39. I/Me	Vne	(uh-knee)
40. Quit	Wikvs	(way-gus)
41. Raccoon	Wotko	(woat-go)
42. Hard	Wvnhe	(wun-he)
43. Sassafras	Weso	(we-so)
44. Chigger	Wasko	(wask-go)
45. Horn	Yvpe	(yuh-be)
46. Nose	Yupo	(yo-bo)
47. Wolf	Yvhv	(yuh-huh)
48. Strong	Yekce	(yeech-gee)
49. Hominy grit	Afke	(off-kee)
50. Red	Cate	(ja-de)
51. Blood	Catv	(ja-da)
52. You	Ceme	(gee-mee)
53. Mouse	Cesse	(jis-si)
54. Snake	Cetto	(jit-doe)
55. Pain	Nokke	(noke-key)
56. Mouth	Cokwv	(jok-wa)
57. Paper	Cokv	(jo-ka)
58. Rabbit	Cufe	(jo-fe)
59. House	Cuko	(jo-go)
60. Long	Cvpke	(jup-ke)
61. Rock	Cvto	(juh-doe)
62. Mother	Ecke	(itch-key)
63. Dried corn	Ecko	(itch-go)
64. Deer	Eco	(e-jo)
65. Dog	Efv	(e-fa)
66. Husband	Ehe	(e-he)
67. Head	Ekv	(e-ga)
68. He/she	Eme	(e-me)
69. Body	Ena	(e-naw)
70. Feet	Ele	(e-lee)
71. Squirrel	Ero	(e-tho)
72. Person	Este	(is-de)
73. Who	Esti	(is-day)

74. Tree	Eto	(e-doe)
75. Hunting	Fakv	(fa-gaw)
76. Hunter	Fayv	(fi-ya)
77. Flute	Fehpv	(fi-h-buh)
78. Heart	Feke	(fee-key)
79. Flame	Fenke	(fin-key)
80. Footbridge	Fenv	(fin-na)
81. Gourd	Fepe	(fee-be)
82. String	Fepkv	(fep-ka)
83. Outside	Fettv	(fit-da)
84. Bone	Fone	(fo-nee)
85. Duck	Fuco	(fo-jo)
86. Bee	Fo	(fo)
87. Bird	Fuswv	(fus-wa)
88. Truth	Fvccv	(fudge-ja)
89. Boogyman	Hahka	(hon-kuh)
90. Tin can	Halo	(ha-low)
91. Good	Here	(he-thee)
92. River	Hvcce	(hut-chee)
93. High	Hvlwe	(hul-we)
94. Sun	Hvse	(huh-see)
95. White	Hvtke	(hut-key)
96. Egg	Custake	(jos-da-key)

# Muscogee (Creek) Nation Departments

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# The College of the Muscogee Nation

MVSKOKE ETVLWV NAKCOKVMVHAKV SVHVLWECVT

Academic Achievement. Native Values.

[www.mvsktc.org](http://www.mvsktc.org)

2170 Raven Circle  
PO Box 917  
Okmulgee, OK 74447  
(918) 549-2800

## General Information

### Mission Statement

The College of the Muscogee Nation is the institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, emphasizing native culture, values, language and self-determination. The College provides a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students as citizens of a tribal and global society, supported by teaching excellence and offers exemplary academic programs that meet student, tribal, and societal needs. Through instructional quality and visionary leadership, the College of the Muscogee Nation encourages lifelong learners, for personal growth, professional development, and intellectual advancement.

### Cultural Context

The College of the Muscogee Nation tradition is founded in Muscogee language and culture passed to us by our elders. On our campus all are free to speak Native languages, share culture and participate in traditions. Vrakkeuckv (Respect) is cultivated. Muscogee ways are interwoven into the curriculum by honoring generations past while teaching and learning in the present to build our tribal nation for generations to come. Academic quality is very much a part of the College of the Muscogee Nation learning outcome.

### Vision Statement

The College of the Muscogee Nation fosters the spirit of enthusiasm for learning, identity embedded in culture, and appreciation for tradition. This will serve our students well into the future, enhancing greater participation within the tribal, local, and global communities.

### Core Values

The College of the Muscogee Nation is committed to core values inherited from our tribal elders and the following we hold true:

VRAKKUECKV (RESPECT): We value our Native culture, language and community, honoring the rights and dignity of all people;

FVTCETV (INTEGRITY): We are fair, honest and accountable for our actions;

MECVLKE (RESPONSIBILITY): We are loyal, reliable, and diligent in all tasks;

EYASKETV (HUMILITY): We are kind, concerned for the well-being of others and embrace equality;

HOPORENKV (WISDOM): We gain insight from scholarly learning and the knowledge and experience of our elders.

### Goals

The following established goals consistent with the Mission, Vision Statement, and Core Values will guide the College of the Muscogee Nation in the present and into the future. These goals will enable us to:

1. Offer academic degree programs that are unique and reflect Mvskoke culture, history and language.

- 2.Create educational opportunities that are accessible to the Native community and tribal members.
- 3.Provide co-curricular activities that respect tribal traditions and culture.
- 4.Develop quality educational programs that give students a scholastic foundation to pursue higher academic degrees or to achieve their career objectives.
- 5.Maintain a focused learning environment in a safe and secure campus.

### **History of the College**

The College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN) is a tribal college created September 1, 2004 by the Muscogee Nation Council and signed into law by the Principal Chief. The law provided legislation to charter the institution and established a board of regents. Prior to the tribal college offering its first classes in the fall trimester of 2004, the National Council passed a resolution expressing support for the CMN with the cooperation of the Oklahoma State University system. An institutional charter was drafted and by-laws were adopted as the organic documents to organize the college governance and administration. While continued support has always been expressed by tribal officials for higher education, this institution is the first college for the Muscogee Nation.

### **Logo**

The CMN logo features a pre-Columbian symbol found on pottery shards in Muscogee ancestral grounds that symbolizes two raven heads. Ravens traditionally represented a catalyst of change with the ability to transform and resurrect--the raven brought light to the earth. The raven is also symbol of knowledge. Traditionally, the symbol represents unity and strength. The logo's perimeter represents the circle of life, community, family, the earth and the universe. It is reflective of CMN's objective to preserve the past and to cultivate the futures of our students.

## **Degrees offered**

### **Degrees Awarded**

Associate in Applied Science in Police Science  
Associate in Applied Science in Gaming  
Associate of Arts in Native American Studies  
Associate of Science in Tribal Services

### **Certificates Awarded**

Certificate in Gaming  
Certificate in Mvskoke Language

## **Student Life**

Student activities offer those individuals who desire campus community involvement an opportunity to meet and socialize with other students as well as members of recognized student organizations. Student Affairs oversees the annual Fall Fest, Native American Heritage Month events, co-curricular activities, and special events. The Student Affairs office provides services and resources for recognized student organizations. CMN's student organizations include the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), Student Housing Organization (SHO), Student Senate, and Tribal Leaders Circle (TLC). The student organizations emphasize native culture, respect, and community service and provides the CMN campus with further opportunity to interact socially as well as provide an outlet to obtain leadership skills. Each organization holds regular meetings throughout the trimesters to plan and conduct activities, community service, and fundraisers. For more information please visit the Student Success Center.



## *A Message from Our President*



Hensci,

Welcome to the College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN). Located in the heart of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and minutes from the capital complex, CMN offers quality education and traditional Muscogee values. Our Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science degrees offer theoretical and practical learning to help any graduate find a brighter future and take advantage of career opportunities.

Our beautiful 25-acre campus houses a 22,000 square foot educational and administrative facility featuring an array of Muscogee designs, Smart Board equipped classrooms, computer lab, library center, faculty offices, and a student commons area. Our student housing consists of 16 two-bedroom units, including telephone, cable, and Internet; accommodating 64 students. Also, construction has been completed on the Student Center, which includes a larger library, bookstore, fitness center, cafeteria, science lab, additional classrooms, and seminar space.

We are committed to the success of our students, our citizens, and our nation. A variety of scholarship opportunities are available and we have friendly, professional advisors on hand to help you with the admissions and enrollment process. Our faculty exhibits academic integrity by providing real-world training. In addition, we are a member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.

The college was established to serve Muscogee citizens and other tribal members utilizing the history, government, language, and culture of the Muscogee people. Education has always been a significant part of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation history. Principal Chief George Tiger and the National Council, as well as prior administrations, have supported CMN through legislation signifying that education and the tribal college are a priority for the Muscogee people.

As President, I look forward to meeting you and assisting you in your pursuit of a brighter future. It is my privilege to offer this catalog to you as your guide to success at CMN. If you have questions or want more information about CMN, please call us at (918) 549-2800 or visit our campus located at 2170 Raven Circle, just off Loop 56 in Okmulgee, OK.

This is a very exciting time for our students, staff, faculty, and Regents as we expand our campus and services for students. We hope you find a bright future with us. We appreciate your interest in the College of the Muscogee Nation.

Mvto! (Thank You!)

Robert Bible,  
President

### Board of Regents

Mike Flud, M.Ed., M.S.  
Chair

Dr. C. Blue Clark, Ph.D.  
Vice Chair

Sharon Mouss, M.S.  
Secretary

Ramona Mason, B.S.  
Member

Pandee Ramirez, J.D.  
Member



**Board of Regents** The CMN Board of Regents is a board of five members created by tribal law and appointed by the Principal Chief and confirmed by the National Council. The Board issues degrees, determines curricula and courses of study and establishes student fees. In addition, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation allocates funds to the institution for operation and maintenance from tribal appropriations and other funds which are made to the board.

# Lighthorse Tribal Police



The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Tribal Department is comprised of 47 employees.

Individuals assigned to the Patrol Division comprise the uniformed officers who primarily patrol the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in marked police cruisers. Patrol officers are responsible for, but not limited to, include:

- Enforcing tribal and state laws, and federal statutes
- Preserving the public peace
- Preventing, detecting, and investigating crimes
- Protecting lives, property, and individual rights
- Apprehending and prosecuting offenders

## Explorer Program

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Tribal Police Department is proud to be the first Tribal Police Exploring Post in the state of Oklahoma, as well as just one of the few in the United States. Law Enforcement Exploring is a program created by the Boys Scouts of America, for young people, boys and girls, with an interest in law enforcement as a possible career. The program is designed to give those that join a hands-on experience in law enforcement. The program is also a way to get young people involved in their communities through the community service that the post takes part in; this also shows the communities that the youth do care about their community.

### Character Building

Although character development is primary a parents responsibility, it is also contributed to by the law enforcement. The explorer who wears the uniform or insignia that identifies him/her as being associated with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Police Department is held to a far more rigid standard of conduct than his/her peers. Explorers are judged by the law enforcement personnel and quickly learn that only the highest standard of conduct is acceptable.

### Leadership Development

Through their experience, Explorers learn and practice leadership skills similar to law enforcement personnel. Those Explorers in leadership positions within the explorer post learn the realities of being responsible for all subordinates' achievements and short falls.

"Lighthorse Explorer Post 106, Founded in 2003, is committed to the education and enforcement of Muscogee (Creek) Nation laws and cultural traditions. As responsible citizens of our communities, we will promote good leadership skills, healthy lifestyles and strive to be positive examples to our peers, families and tribal nations."



WE ARE THE LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPLORER POST OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION TRIBAL POLICE. HELPING TO EDUCATE YOUNG ADULTS INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN LAW ENFORCEMENT WHILE PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE IN THEIR YOUTH.

The program is open to people ages 14-20. It focuses on six areas:

- ◆ Career
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Fitness
- ◆ Service
- ◆ Social
- ◆ Outdoor

## Criminal Investigations Division

The Criminal Investigations Division is responsible for the investigations of Major Crimes that occur in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. There are currently two Criminal Investigators and one Narcotics Officer for the Lighthorse Police. Investigators generally investigate crimes that require specialized training in areas such as property crimes, personal crimes, physical and sexual child abuse, and white collar crimes, (frauds and forgeries) in Indian Country.





## Mvskoke Nation Youth Services

The Mvskoke Nation Youth Services (MNYS) program was created in October 2014. It is a result of the 2014 Strategic Planning session. Citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation ages 12-24 are eligible to participate in services.

### **Vision Statement:**

*Engage Mvskoke youth in organized activities that will contribute to the community and tribal community; and help them enhance their interest, skills, and abilities into their adulthood.*

### **Mission Statement:**

*Empowering Mvskoke youth by connecting to culture, community and resources.*

### **Program Goals:**

Empower Mvskoke Youth	Sustain the Mvskoke Way of Life
Connect Youth to Existing Resources	Promote Existing Health Programs
Identify Gaps in Services	Build Civic Awareness
Recruit & Train Youth Advocates	Encourage Positive Relationships

### **Program Values:**

- **Youth Voice**-the ideas, opinions, involvement, and initiative of people considered to be “young”.
- **Collaboration**-a joint effort of multiple individuals or work groups to accomplish a task or project.
- **Youth Empowerment**-is an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people, including **youth** and adults.
- **Youth Service**-the involvement of young people in providing services to the Mvskoke Nation and their communities.
- **Youth Advocacy**-to provide support to young people in all areas that affect them, be it education, housing, employment, unemployment, health, social security, recreation and human relationships.

In this first of the program, MNYS has focused on providing life skills, awareness projects and providing opportunities for youth to be involved in their communities through service learning. Two major focuses of the MNYS since its creation has been focusing on the issue of teen pregnancy prevention and developing the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council. With regards to teen pregnancy prevention, MNYS has been working with Planned Parenthood of the Heartland on the *I'm Committed* curriculum. *I'm Committed* focuses on helping young people to create a Reproductive Life Plan which is a set of personal goals and helps them to understand how pregnancy and parenting will affect those life goals. MNYS will use *I'm Committed* as its first ongoing training.



The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council (MNYC) was officially formed on June 20, 2015 after several months of planning by youth. The group is made up of Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens ages 12-24. The mission of the MNYC is:

- To empower Mvskoke Youth by listening and taking action.
- To enhance our voice by promoting positive changes and informed decisions.
- To affect all generations and sustain the Mvskoke way of life.

The MNYC will focus on personal and peer advocacy, creating and participating in service learning projects, and keeping the Mvskoke customs and traditions alive and active. The MNYC meets the second Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at the Mound building on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation complex in Okmulgee, OK.



**The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council**





## Mission Statement

The Department of Education and Training provides support and direction to the management of comprehensive educational programs which results in quality educational opportunities for Muscogee (Creek) people from early childhood through college. To help better serve the students, we are partnered with several local and surrounding universities and colleges.

The Department of Education and Training consists of the following programs: Employment and Training, Eufaula Dormitory, Head Start, Higher Education, Higher Education Scholarship Foundation, Johnson O'Malley, MCN Literacy Program, Mvsokoke Language Program, Yuchi Language Program, Reintegration and TERO.

## Available Assistance

Our department not only assists in ensuring quality programs but administers two grant programs for students' academic, as well as, extra-curricular needs. The department's goal is to help propel our students to where they need and want to be. These two grants were created to assist with that goal.

### 1. Special Academic/Extra Curricular Activities Program

Designed to address the needs Muscogee (Creek) students who have exhausted all other funding sources to meet their need and who are not receiving any type of financial assistance from any other tribal education program for this specific need. The grant will assist eligible students with approved need one time, that may range up to a maximum of \$500 based on financial need for special academic & school related extra-curricular activities.

### 2. Post-Graduate Education Scholarship Program

Will provide financial assistance to MCN citizens pursuing careers that require advanced degree or certifications. The program is designed to pay for costs that are not covered by standard scholarship programs and financial aid. The funds will be used to pay for preparatory courses and examinations for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Dental Admissions Test (DAT), the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), the Engineer in Training Test (EIT), the Professional Engineer (PE) Test, the Uniform Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Examination, the Oklahoma General Education Test (OGET), the Oklahoma Subject Area Tests (OSAT), the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Exam (OPTE), National Board Certification for Teachers, Certified Financial Planner (CFP) Examination, Pre-Certification Educational Requirements for the CFP and miscellaneous professional certification/entrance tests as approved by the Secretary of Education and Training. In addition for all admission/application fees, Bar Review Courses, Bar Examinations and other miscellaneous graduate school education expenses of Muscogee (Creek) citizens.



## Mission Statement

The Higher Education program will encourage scholastic achievement by promoting and supporting quality academic opportunities by providing financial assistance to members of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in pursuing an undergraduate and post-graduate college level education. We will ensure the needs of our Creek students are addressed by providing academic, financial, and career counseling from our dedicated and experienced staff.

**Undergraduate Grants** - the Higher Education administers three (3) grant programs for students pursuing an Associate's or Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university. Only NEW APPLICANTS are required to complete an application. If you are currently receiving funding from the Higher Education program you are not required to complete an application each semester. Continuing students need to submit their official transcript from the semester in which they were funded, as well as a class schedule for the upcoming semester to stay eligible for the program.

1. **Tribal Funds Grant** - will be awarded to enrolled citizens of the MCN attending an accredited college or university with no blood minimum quantity required. Funding for this grant does not require Pell-eligibility. Undergraduate students are eligible for this grant. The award amount will be determined by the number of hours in which student is enrolled up to a maximum of 18 hours. Award rate = \$125.00 per credit hour.
2. **Creek Nation of Oklahoma Scholarship Grant (BIA Grant)** - The MCN Higher Education Program will expend funds through self-governance to award educational grants to our tribal citizens, with no minimum blood quantum required, attending accredited institutions of higher learning. Funding for this grant is limited to Pell-eligible undergraduate students only.
3. **Tribal Incentive Grant** - will award citizens of the Muscogee Nation who meet the grade point requirements at an accredited school. Students attending college with a GPA of 3.0 or better during the semester are able to apply for this program.

**Post Graduate Program** – Established to provide financial aid opportunities for members of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to further their education beyond a bachelor's degree for a first time Masters' Degree. The award amount is determined by the number of hours in which the student is enrolled up to a maximum of 9 hours. The award rate = \$250 per credit hour.

**Doctoral Degree Program** – New students will be required to complete an application to determine eligibility. After eligibility is determined, awards will be completed upon review of the needs analysis that is finalized by the university. The awards will be sent directly to the school to use towards tuition, books, and fees as determined through the needs analysis.

**Emergency Scholarship Fund** – Established to provide assistance to Muscogee Creek Higher Education students to pay for debt that is preventing their effort to complete their education. If approved, students will be eligible for a one-time award up to a maximum of \$5,000 per student for supplemental financial assistance depending on the need and availability of funds.

**Graduate Stole** – The Higher Education office is committed to providing opportunities for our citizens to further their education. We also want to recognize your accomplishments as you complete your goal of graduation. As you walk across the stage in your commencement ceremony, it would be a great honor for us to have you wear the custom Muscogee Graduation Stole.

The stole is a gift from the Muscogee Creek Nation. It has the seal of the Great Muscogee (Creek) Nation on one side and the Higher Education seal on other side. Under the Higher Education seal, the words “Emvhakv Svhlhvhwecat” are in the Muscogee language translated to mean “Higher Education.”

This stole is designated for college graduates and should be requested at least one month prior to your graduation date.



Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Higher Education  
PO Box 580  
Okmulgee, OK 74447  
(918) 732-7689  
(918) 732-7661  
(800) 482-1979 ext. 7661  
(918) 732-7694 Fax  
[highered@mcn-nsn.gov](mailto:highered@mcn-nsn.gov)

## MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION



PARENTS • STUDENTS • EDUCATORS

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide a comprehensive program that encompasses academic education, cultural awareness and community involvement according to the guidelines of the federal regulations governing Johnson O'Malley programs.

**JOM PROGRAM GOALS**

- To provide technical assistance to all school sites within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation for IEC training, program design, goals & objectives and budget revision.
- To provide an opportunity for parents to become involved in the design of the JOM program.
- To provide a mechanism which allows Indian parents and public school administrators to work together to establish educational programs.
- To provide in-service training for the program coordinators, IEC, program staff, and school administrators in regards to program compliance and to develop a network system between programs.
- To provide an annual parent committee training specifically to meet the needs of the parents on the Indian Education Committee.
- To provide an annual monitoring of each of the 45 school programs for compliance with the federal regulations and Creek Nation policies.

**JOM SCHOOL PROGRAMS** – Each school program is designed based on a 'Needs Assessment' conducted by the Indian Education Committee.

- |                   |                     |                |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| • Tutoring        | • Incentives        | • Seniors Fees |
| • School Supplies | • Cultural Programs | • ACT/SAT Fees |

**JOM PROGRAM EVENTS**

- **Education and Career Expo** – event for high school students that allow them to explore education and career possibilities. The expo is done in collaboration with the Department of Education and Training programs.
- **In-Service Training** – service provided to JOM IEC members, coordinators, superintendents and administrators to ensure compliance requirements for the MCN required by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for federal regulations.
- **Statewide JOM Conference** – collaboration of Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole Nation JOM programs which provides workshop training for parent committees, coordinators and administrators.

**JOM INCENTIVES**

- **Academic Incentive** – each year a \$500 incentive is awarded to 16 Muscogee (Creek) JOM seniors within the 45 school districts of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.
- **Belvin Hill Memorial Incentive** – \$500 incentive awarded to two seniors participating in the annual Challenge Bowl competition.

- **Advanced Placement Incentive** – The purpose of the Advanced Placement Test Incentive is to provide a service to Muscogee (Creek) high school students that will enable them to participate in advanced placement tests in order to receive college level credits.

**SCHOOLS SERVED BY THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION** – The MCN JOM program services 11 counties.

- |                 |               |                |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| • Allen Bowden  | • Hilldale    | • Oktaha       |
| • Bearden       | • Holdenville | • Paden        |
| • Bristow       | • Jenks       | • Porter       |
| • Broken Arrow  | • Kellyville  | • Preston      |
| • Checotah      | • Kiefer      | • Ryal         |
| • Coweta        | • Lone Star   | • Sand Springs |
| • Depew         | • Mason       | • Sapulpa      |
| • Dewar         | • Mannford    | • Stidham      |
| • Eufaula       | • Midway      | • Tulsa        |
| • Glenpool      | • Morris      | • Twin Hills   |
| • Graham/Dustin | • Moss        | • Union        |
| • Gypsy         | • Mounds      | • Wagoner      |
| • Hanna         | • Muskogee    | • Weleetka     |
| • Haskell       | • Okemah      | • Wetumka      |
| • Henryetta     | • Okmulgee    | • Wilson       |

### Challenge Bowl

The Challenge Bowl is a Muscogee (Creek) Nation event that is administered through the Johnson-O'Malley program. The purpose of the MCN Challenge Bowl is to promote our children to learn about Creek cultural, history, government and language using traditional values of brotherhood as a foundation. The Challenge Bowl committee made a commitment to set by example, positive role models in good citizenship and tribal pride that would carry on throughout the year and not just during the few days of the competition.

Each year Creek Nation employees and community members prepare for the competition by having monthly core group sessions to prepare the study guides, competition questions and conducting training sessions for the volunteers. It is a great deal of work but seeing the faces of the students, parents, and sponsors during the competition and awards ceremony is worthwhile. The Challenge Bowl brings schools, community, employees, and citizens together with the common goal of developing tribal pride within our youth.







## **Mission Statement**

To provide career and educational opportunities through quality, culturally focused guidance to enhance self-sufficiency, involve community and family, and promote a stronger workforce.

## **Career Readiness**

- Resume' building—Assistance with creating and updating personal resume'.
- Job search—Assistance with learning how to find jobs in the client's local community.
- Career assessment—Assistance in determining and exploring career interests and options.
- Life Skills—Workshops and other opportunities to learn and practice employability skills.
- Work Keys—An assessment to help individuals build their skills to increase opportunities and develop successful career pathways.

## **Education & Training**

- GED Test—Assistance with payment of the GED test, one time per participant.
- GED Incentive—A \$300 incentive for completion of the GED.

**Class Room Training**—financial assistance with various educational expenses, must have HS diploma or GED.

- Full Time—Bi-weekly allowance payments for attendance at the College of Muscogee Nation, OSUIT or approved Technical Schools.
- Part Time—Assistance with tuition, books, equipment, and other related fees at approved Technical Schools (Central Tech, Green Country, Gordon Cooper, Indian Capital, Kiamichi, Northeast, Tulsa Tech, Wes Watkins and assistance for Allied Health core classes at Bacone, Carl Albert, Connors, Seminole State, Tulsa Community College).
- OSUIT Registered Nurse—Monthly stipends, tuition and book assistance for full time students in the Registered Nurse program.
- Compressed Natural Gas—Monthly stipends, tuition and book assistance for full time students in the Compressed Natural Gas program at OSUIT.

**Tribal Grant & Incentive** —a grant for enrolled MCN citizens attending accredited Vocational Institutions nationwide. An incentive is also available for students obtaining the required Grade Point Average. High School students enrolled concurrently at public universities or technical schools in the state of Oklahoma are also eligible for assistance.

## **Work Experience**

- Adult—Up to 90 days of work experience for unemployed individuals to gain work experience and employable skills.
- College—A 12 week summer internship for college Juniors, Seniors, and Graduate students. Applications are accepted from March 1 – March 20.



### **Muscogee (Creek) Nation Literacy Program**

Every student and citizen of the MCN has unlimited access to more than 4,000 digital books matched to students' interests and reading level to encourage reading anywhere, anytime. We would like to encourage everyone to login and share the reading experience with family and friends! We periodically share great ideas and create reading challenges to motivate students to read more. Here are some examples of upcoming events and reading challenges for the entire Creek Nation!

**Mission:** The Muscogee Creek Nation Literacy Program was established to provide all Muscogee Creek citizens and its community with the opportunity to improve their literacy and preserve the Mvskoke language through a partnership with myON reader, an online digital library.

**Vision:** The program will help with challenges that our students might face in regards to being proficient in reading, comprehension and vocabulary. Enabling them to be college and career ready. We will provide the reader with a custom Muscogee Creek book set, all converted and/or created in the Mvskoke language to assist in preserving the language, through visual and audible learning. The literacy of the Nation is fundamental to improving the education level of our community, cultural preservation and creating a strong sovereign Nation.

#### **To Login to myON – It's as easy as 1-2-3**

1. Go online to [www.MuscogeeCreekNationReads.com](http://www.MuscogeeCreekNationReads.com)
2. Click on login now button and enter the following info:
  - a. School Name: (Example) Sapulpa J.O.M., Muscogee Creek Nation
  - b. User Name: (Citizenship Number or Designated School ID# for non-Creek citizens)
  - c. Password: MCN
3. Click on submit and you will be prompted to take an interest inventory & a short placement test.  
The process will take approximately 20 Minutes and then you have immediate access to all the digital books on myON!

All JOM Schools, Head Start Centers and Child Care Center in the Muscogee Creek Nation District have access to myON. Parents please get with those programs to get your login information.

### **District Challenge**

To help kick off Literacy Month in December 2014, we started a school district challenge. We are challenging the schools within our district to help get involved and help our students use and access the program. So we are challenging them with a contest that will run from December 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015. To be eligible for the district challenge your school would have to be within the Muscogee Creek Nation boundary and your school has to be using myON. The district with the most hours read will be the selected winner. You will not only get the bragging rights, and be featured on our website, Facebook and newsletter but will receive a set of 20 Kindle Fire HDs to be used for your students.

### **I LOVE to Read**

Students are headed to the end of the school year and ready for summer, but we don't want them to check out already. We are challenging our students to love reading. Challenge starts on February 1 and will run until the end of May 2015. The winner will be selected on based on the amount of time-spent reading during this challenge. We will have three winners. 1<sup>st</sup> place will receive an iPad Mini, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Place will receive a Visa Gift Card. All will be recognized at the Muscogee Creek Nation National Council Meeting in June and receive a reading certificate.

### **Family Literacy Night**

Families and the community are one of the most important aspects of a student's success. In order to increase awareness and participation of families in their student's success, we can hold a Family Literacy Night at either your school or community. These events are in collaboration with the schools and communities within the district and their Native families. Muscogee Creek Nation Reads gets the opportunity to explain the program, educate families on how to use myON and how myON can be a great literacy tool for their entire family.

If you would like to schedule one for your school or community please email [Rnarcomey-Watson@myon.com](mailto:Rnarcomey-Watson@myon.com).



Muscogee (Creek Nation Literacy Program Project Manager Randi Narcomey-Watson presents Zane Hamilton with an iPad Mini April 23 at Wetumka Middle School for being the winner of the Read and Win Holiday Challenge.



## **“Exercising Sovereignty and Self-Determination through Traditional Gift Giving”**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The central purpose and role of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Higher Education Scholarship Foundation Program established by the Muscogee (Creek) National Council is to promote self-sufficiency, proactive community participation, self-reliance and self-determination.

To exercise the proficiency of tribal sovereignty by providing a sustainable future for Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens through academic scholarship, community initiatives, and research that benefits the growth and prosperity of Muscogee (Creek) Nation communities.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Higher Education Scholarship Foundation Program is a Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribal government non-profit program qualified under Section 7871 (a) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

All contributions to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Higher Education Scholarship Foundation Program are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### **CORE VALUES:**

#### **SPIRITUAL BELIEF— *Vkvsymkv***

To acquire a spiritual understanding of life....

#### **COMMUNITY — *Emetvl’hvmke***

To place community interest and benefits ahead of individual and personal gain.

#### **HUMILITY — *Eyasketv***

To be kind and to unconditionally help one another through initiative efforts.

#### **RESPECT — *Vrakkueckv***

To help one another in time of need.

#### **INTEGRITY — *Fvtcetv***

To take responsibility for our performance and commitments.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY — *Emenhonrvke Tayat***

To be loyal, reliable, and diligent in all tasks.

#### **WISDOM — *Hoporrenkv***

To achieve a happy, healthy and self-sustaining life.

#### **HIGHER EDUCATION — *Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecat***

To bring a sustainable future to Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

#### **LEADERSHIP—*En’homvttetv***

To promote that every individual has the potential to achieve success.

## Requirements

1. Must be a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation (copy of citizenship card).
2. Completed Higher Education Scholarship Foundation Program scholarship application.
3. Enrolled as a full-time student.
4. Attending an accredited institution of higher education.
5. A one page typed personal statement including your goals, career choice, and tribal community involvement with an emphasis on how this scholarship will affect your college career.
6. If you are a **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR** or **FIRST-TIME ENTERING STUDENT** you must submit the following :
  - A. A copy of your high school transcript or GED certificate.
  - B. College Admission letter and class schedule of the semester you are requesting funding.
7. If you are a **CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENT** you must submit the following:
  - A. A copy of your college transcript(s).
  - B. Class schedule of the semester you are requesting funding.

## Scholarships (Scholarship Award Range \$500-\$2000)

- |                                                                         |                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • <b>Phillip Coon Scholarship</b>                                       | • <b>ECKE 'MVNOKECKV Scholarship for Single Mothers</b>                         |
| • <b>Henry Marsey Harjo Scholarship</b>                                 | • <b>Jackson Narcomey Rising Artist Scholarship</b>                             |
| • <b>The George &amp; Mollie (Jones) Hicks Memorial Scholarship</b>     | • <b>The Reuben R. &amp; Fannie Mae (Cook) Turner Medical Field Scholarship</b> |
| • <b>Corporal Joe Halley Scholarship</b>                                | • <b>Naomi Harjo Foster/Lois Harjo Ball Scholarship</b>                         |
| • <b>Bill S. Fife Scholarship</b>                                       | • <b>Kevin "Babe" Aaron Memorial Scholarship</b>                                |
| • <b>Alfred Berryhill Scholarship</b>                                   | • <b>University of Sciences and Arts of Oklahoma Scholarship</b>                |
| • <b>Cvcke' Enheromka Scholarship</b>                                   | • <b>Kenneth Sourjohn, Sr. Memorial Scholarship</b>                             |
| • <b>The Lou Canard Navarro Memorial Scholarship</b>                    | • <b>George Tiger &amp; Frances Tiger Scholarship</b>                           |
| • <b>Fighting Cancer for Kat Scholarship</b>                            | • <b>Checotah Casino Scholarship</b>                                            |
| • <b>Perry Beaver Scholarship</b>                                       |                                                                                 |
| • <b>Claude Cox Scholarship</b>                                         |                                                                                 |
| • <b>Susan Colleen Wilson Memorial Scholarship for Muscogee Orphans</b> |                                                                                 |

## Deadlines

June 1<sup>st</sup>—Fall Semester      December 1<sup>st</sup>—Spring Semester  
All applications can be mailed, faxed or delivered to the Scholarship Foundation Program Office.

## Contact

**Director:** Dr. Pete G. Coser (918) 732-7755

**Resource Development Specialist:** Kryste Bengé (918) 732-7763

**Administrative Assistant:** Nathan Barnett (918) 732-7754

**Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Higher Education Scholarship Foundation Program  
P.O. Box 580 (Hwy 75 & Loop 56)  
Okmulgee, OK 74447  
[www.creeknationfoundation.org](http://www.creeknationfoundation.org)**